

Chronology

1981-1984

*So if we sell our land,
love it as we've loved it.
Care for it as we've cared for it.
Hold in your mind*

*the memory of the land as it is when you take it.
And with all your strength, with all your mind,
with all your heart, preserve it for your children
and love it---as God loves us all.*

Chief Seattle -1854

At a tribal assembly
in western Washington
where Indian and government
representatives were preparing
to sign land treaties.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS - PART III

Events integral to the problems of chemical and hazardous wastes in the Ecumenical Task Force service area and the ETF's response are highlighted in the following chronology. "A History of Disaster - Chronology of Events" from 1836 to September 15, 1981 is summarized in the 1980 and 1981 Progress Reports of the ETF.

- September 17, 1981 Sister Margeen and Barbara Hanna gave a presentation to the Contemporary Environmental Issues class at Niagara County Community College.
- September 21, 1981 The federal government announced it will conduct a limited study of present and former Love Canal residents in an effort to determine whether the landfill had an adverse effect on the residents' health. Budget cutbacks prohibit the much more comprehensive study promised 18 months ago.
- September 23, 1981 Five students from Sweden visited the ETF office for orientation and discussion of the hazardous and toxic chemical environmental problems on the Niagara Frontier.
- September 27, 1981-
September 29, 1981 ETF sponsored a National Consultation, "Perspectives On A Long-Term Disaster." Attendees were national Judicatory/Diocesan personnel.
- September 29, 1981 The Love Canal area Revitalization Agency (LCARA) named six members of a proposed 12-member advisory committee that will recommend what improvements should be made to the Love Canal neighborhood if the area is determined to be safe.

October 5, 1981

E. Grant Anderson presented testimony for Amici at Hyde Park hearings. Mr. Anderson, a hydrogeologist, stated that chemicals from the landfill had leaked through the gorge wall (approximately 2,000 feet from the landfill) into the Niagara River. This conflicts with other witnesses presented by state and federal attorneys, who insisted there was no evidence of contamination along the gorge wall.

October 6, 1981

Final day of testimony in the Hyde Park Hearings.

October 12, 1981

New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) released a report entitled "The Ravaged River" in which it charged that state and federal agencies are permitting industries and municipalities to dump 500 million gallons of toxic chemicals into the Niagara River daily, posing a "serious threat to public health."

October 16, 1981

ETF Attorney, Barbara Morrison, petitioned Judge Curtin to force the Hooker Chemical and Plastic Corp. to trial in the Hyde Park landfill case even if it means five or six years of litigation. Morrison contended that the settlement agreement as it stands would free Hooker from future suit in return for a cleanup that would not reach the dangerous toxics that are entering the Niagara River 150 feet below the rock strata where Hooker can end its tests.

State and Federal attorneys promised to begin an immediate testing program in the Niagara River gorge below the Hyde Park landfill. (See February 28, 1982 entry.)

March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation has issued suggested guidelines for studies of health problems associated with disasters like those at Love Canal. The book is dedicated to "the residents, past and present, of the Love Canal of New York State," and is entitled, Lest You Think It Was In Vain.

October 21, 1981

Sister Margeen gave a presentation at a Niagara University School of Social Work Seminar.

October 27, 1981 Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta announced it will conduct a \$400,000 study on a small number of Love Canal residents and former residents to see if exposure to chemicals can be linked to genetic damage.

October 28, 1981 Two employees of New York Telephone filed grievances when they refused to work at Love Canal. Both employees stated they got headaches, their eyes became irritated and they developed rashes while working in the eight-foot-deep trench immediately outside the fenced-in portion of Love Canal between 97th. and 99th. Streets along Frontier Avenue.

November 9, 1981 Niagara Gazette revealed that the Executive Director of the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency signed a legal document which removes the right of the Morris Family to sue the agency for any health problems or property loss "which may arise because of chemical contamination."

November 10, 1981 ETF Executive Board and Staff participated in a full day planning session to develop goals and objectives for 1982.

November 11, 1981 The first progress report on the review of available Love Canal documents by the ETF, under terms of their contract with the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency, was presented to members of LCARA.

November 17, 1981 Sister Margeen gave presentation to Southshore Rotary Club, Blasdell, N.Y.

November 19, 1981 Rev. James Brewster, Sister Margeen, and Barbara Hanna gave a presentation to the Board of Buffalo Area Metropolitan Ministries (BAMM).

November 20, 1981 The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans to construct an impermeable concrete wall around the Love Canal.

November 30, 1981 ETF Executive Board accepted the resignation of Elizabeth Watts as Executive Secretary. Elizabeth and her husband, Admiral, will take up residence in Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

December 12, 1981

It was disclosed today that David Twedell, EPA witness, testifying on hydrogeology and the effects of ground-water flow, misrepresented his academic credentials to the court in the Hyde Park hearings. In an affidavit submitted to the court, Twedell stated he had a Bachelor of Science degree and Doctoral degree in geology from the University of Houston in Clear Lake, Texas; whereas official records of the University indicate that he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in physical science only.

Attorneys for the Department of Justice and the EPA requested that the testimony of David Twedell be withdrawn from consideration because "Twedell's testimony was not essential to approval of the agreement." ETF attorney, Barbara Morrison, objected to the motion since Twedell was the only witness on hydrogeology for the government.

Patricia Brown joined the staff of ETF as Executive Secretary.

G. Thomas Martin read an ETF Executive Board statement at the opening of SCA public hearings in Youngstown, N.Y.

December 2, 1981

The Rev. Guy Peek, Sister Margeen, and Barbara Hanna met with the funding committee of the Episcopal Ventures In Faith fund at the Diocesan House in Buffalo, N.Y. As a result of the meeting, Ventures in Faith granted \$6,000 in support of ETF endeavors.

December 3, 1981

Courier Express reported that David Twedell, a governmental witness under federal investigation for allegedly falsifying his academic credentials is the same man who supervised the installation of 20 to 30 percent of the environmental monitoring wells at Love Canal.

December 6, 1981

Students from a Norwegian Folk School visited the ETF office. They stayed in the area for approximately two weeks and visited ETF several times as they sought data on the hazardous and toxic chemical environmental problems of the area.

December 22, 1981

Niagara Gazette reported that Mirex has been detected in dust collected at the Tam Ceramics Inc. building adjacent to the Hyde Park landfill. Also, Tam has been required to carefully monitor and clean its sewer lines because the system has been infiltrated by migrating Hooker chemicals. Those chemicals cannot be properly treated at the city's ailing sewage treatment plant.

Sister Margeen gave a presentation to Immaculata High School students in Hamburg, New York.

January 13, 1982

Mrs. Terri Mudd, Sister Margeen, Barbara Hanna, and Pat Brown gave a presentation to the St. Catherines Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada at St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Church in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

January 22, 1982

Rev. James Brewster, Father Jack Kieffer, and Sister Margeen met with Mayor O'Laughlin, Chairman of the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency, to discuss timeframes and procedures for evaluation of EPA Love Canal Environmental Monitoring Study when it is released.

January 29, 1982

Attorney General Abrams today filed a \$200 million suit against Hookerd Chemical and Plastics Corp. charging "that the mishandling of toxic chemicals at the Buffalo Avenue chemical plant has contaminated the Niagara River."

February 17, 1982

Lois Gibbs movie aired in our area, entitled: "Lois Gibbs and the Love Canal".

February 18, 1982

Sister Margeen, Barbara Hanna, and Vince Scherber gave a presentation at Niagara County Community College.

February 28, 1982

U.S. Justice Department confirmed the presence of chemical contamination in the Niagara River gorge below the Hyde Park landfill. Testing was done on October 16, 1981 as promised during the hearings in federal court before Judge Curtin. Contamination was also detected 7,000 feet north of the landfill.

March 1, 1982 Niagara Gazette reports that New York State attorneys have agreed to begin negotiations aimed at settling the S-Area \$200 million suit filed January 29, 1981 against the Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corp.

March 2, 1982 "Team Building" retreat was held by ETF Board and Staff at Stella Niagara.

March 18, 1982 General Task Force meeting was held at ETF office.

March 30, 1982 U.S. District Judge John T. Curtin approved the cleanup plan for the Hyde Park landfill.

April 13, 1982 Barbara Hanna, Pat Brown, and Roger Cook gave a presentation to St. Paul's Chippawa United Church women in Niagara Falls, Ont.

April 20, 1982 Sister Margeen and Barbara Hanna attended workshop in Cleveland, Ohio sponsored by Great Lakes Tomorrow.

April 21, 1982 Sister Margeen, Barbara Hanna, and Pat Brown gave presentation to class from Niagara County Community College at Lockport Senior High School.

April 22, 1982 ETF received a telephone call from Mrs. Colleen Zybala requesting help for the citizens living near the Hooker Durez plant in North Tonawanda. Dioxin had been discovered in a storm sewer just outside the plant property and is suspected to be leaching from the plant site. Mrs. Zybala also reported a March 1982 chlorobenzene spill in the area.

April 23, 1982

Sister Margeen, Barbara Hanna, and Vincent Scherber of ETF visited the Zybala home and met with several residents and Mayor Betty Hoffman of North Tonawanda. ETF offered to the groups: organizing assistance, help with sampling and/or technical advice, legal advice if the citizens wanted to invite the ETF attorney to help them, clergy presence and a place to meet in a church in the North Tonawanda area, and clergy and other professional counseling when needed.

An evening meeting was held with concerned residents of North Tonawanda, Sister Margeen, Barbara Hanna, Rev. Dr. James Brewster, President of ETF Board of Directors, and ETF attorney Barbara Morrison. As a result of this meeting, the residents formed the Durez Area Residents Association (DARA) and planned to set up a temporary office at the ETF facility.

April 28, 1982

ETF Board Members and Staff participated in Western New York Conference American Lutheran Church DSMA at Stella Niagara.

May 1, 1982

ETF Board Members and Staff gave presentation at American Lutheran Church convention at the Niagara Falls International Convention Center.

May 6, 1982

Hooker agrees to purchase the nine homes surrounding the Hyde Park landfill. Purchase offers will be made within 120 days and property owners will have 60 days to decide on the offer, with the closing to take place within 90 days after acceptance. Hooker said the purchase offer "plus 10 percent for contingencies" would be based on a Fair Market Value to be established by independent appraisers. The company said there would be no reduction in values simply because the homes are near the landfill.

May 8, 1982

ETF Board Members and Staff attended a public forum, arranged by the Durez Area Residents Association, with Federal, State, and local officials on what has been and will be done to remedy the potential danger to the safety and health of the Durez area of North Tonawanda.

May 21, 1982

Hooker (Durez) refused to sign a consent order for testing with New York State because they felt that a stipulation inserted by Health Commissioner Axelrod was "premature and unwarranted". That stipulation would have required Hooker to engage a consultant to prepare a plan to collect information that would identify any possible exposure, risks of health effects resulting from off-site migration of chemicals.

DEC Commissioner Flacke ordered an enforcement hearing to compel Hooker to sign the consent order.

Hooker contended that dioxin found in storm sewers did not come from Hooker Durez waste dumps but from flyash storage sites.

May 26, 1982

Sister Margeen addressed the St. Catharines Diocesan Council, the Catholic Women's League of Canada, in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada.

June 7, 1982

Rev. Richard Donoughue made presentation at Lutheran Church of America Convention, Cazanovia, N.Y.

Antioch College students from Ohio visited ETF office.

June 17, 1982

The first of 227 Love Canal homes is demolished. The bulldozers piled the debris in its basement and then the hole was covered with a clay cap.

Sister Margeen and Barbara Hanna gave presentation to 5th. grade students at Errick Road School, Town of Wheatfield, New York.

June 21, 1982

Nine families near the Hyde Park landfill received an offer for appraisal and purchase of their homes from Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corp. In their letter, Hooker stated, "The (purchase) offer will provide, if accepted, that you release any claims against Hooker for any property loss or damage relating to the Hyde Park landfill."

July 9, 1982

Nine Sisters of St. Francis from Rochester, Minnesota, visited the ETF office.

The DEC found dioxin at levels of 71 parts per trillion in a storm sewer on Wilson Ave. north of the Durez plant site. DEC was surprised to find dioxin north, since it believed water flowed in a southerly direction from plant property. Hooker contended the DEC consultant's dioxin analysis had been done improperly.

July 12, 1982

A total of eight workers involved in the cleanup of the Love Canal suffered skin disorders, according to an internal State Health Department document obtained by the Niagara Gazette.

New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams revealed state test results of two now vacant Love Canal homes (inner ring). These tests revealed the first documented proof that dioxin had migrated into canal area homes. Dioxin was detected at 17.2 parts per million. In addition to dioxin, scientists discovered other dangerous chemicals, including C-56, lindane and trichlorophenol in soil and water samples collected throughout the neighborhood.

July 14, 1982

EPA report on Love Canal released. The report concluded:

Habitability: Most of the Love Canal neighborhood beyond the first two rings of homes is free of significant contamination and can be revitalized with little fear for safety of residents.

Extent of Migration: Test confirmed high dioxin levels in inner ring homes on 97th. and 99th. Streets, but there is no contamination in outer ring area.

Effectiveness of Remedial Efforts: The 1978-79 remedial program to seal the dump with clay cap and trap leaking chemicals in a drainage system has effectively stopped chemical migration.

Future Remedial Work: The EPA has announced plans to clean area sewers and the Black and Bergholtz Creeks as recommended in the report to ensure safety. Federal "superfund" money will be used for the cleanup.

July 28, 1982

St. Lawrence University students visited ETF office.

August 18, 1982

The EPA noted Durez is among 1 of 15 major dischargers along the Niagara River and that Durez discharges are above acceptable levels. The EPA is assisting the New York State DEC in developing permits to control liquid discharges.

September 15, 1982

ETF made a presentation to the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency calling for more independent scientific review of the EPA report and requested the agency to open public hearings and acknowledge clearly its responsibility. Short of that, the ETF announced it had no other recourse but to advise church members in Western New York not to move into the Love Canal area.

Charging that the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency Board had been illegally reorganized to prevent citizens' representatives from objecting to policies, William Waggoner resigned from the Board.

September 16, 1982

The Niagara Falls Board of Education voted to deny the state permission to demolish the 99th. Street School. Niagara Gazette reports that according to a resolution passed by the Board of Education, "the Board cannot justify granting permission to demolish the school without adequate compensation."

September 30, 1982

It was announced that the NYS Attorney General plans to file a multimillion-dollar lawsuit against Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corporation to force a toxic chemical cleanup and containment project at its Durez Division plant.

October 4, 1982

Sister Margeen talked to Governor Carey's aide, Henry Williams, to inquire about Carey's position on the Durez situation. Mr. Williams indicated he was unaware of any problems at Durez.

New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams told Governor Carey today that the state should not adopt a policy encouraging "revitalization" of the Love Canal area, for fear of contributing to a "second Love Canal at Love Canal."

October 7, 1982

The first phase of work under the Hyde Park Settlement Agreement commenced.

October 16, 1982

Dr. James Dunlop blames remedial activity at the Hyde Park landfill as cause of 14-year-old girl's medical problems. In a letter to Attorney Lewis Steel, Dr. Dunlop stated, "It appears to me that (her) symptoms are caused by chemical fumes emanating from the Hyde Park landfill."

Colleen Zybala of DARA and an ETF Board Member Roger Cook spoke at New York State Sociological Association meetings on the Durez situation.

October 17, 1982

Attorney Lewis Steele requests the State Health Department to begin air monitoring in the area of the Hyde Park landfill immediately because of reported resident health problems.

October 20, 1982

Sister Margeen, Barbara Hanna, and Pat Brown attend Conference on Health Hazards of Synthetics in Albany, N. Y.

- October 22, 1982 Colleen Zybala of DARA and an ETF Board Member spoke briefly to Dr. Barry Commoner about the Durez problem, in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.
- October 25, 1982 The DEC and DOH held a meeting in Buffalo with Durez Area Residents. A number of residents had complained that strong, often irritating, odors (attributed to the Durez facility) were frequently present in the neighborhood, especially early in the morning. State officials said they would try to make air monitoring tubes available.
- October 28, 1982 As reported in the Niagara Gazette, New York State has acquired a temporary land easement which allows access to the area of the Love Canal where the 99th. Street School is located, so workers can execute a chemical cleanup plan. The cleanup includes demolition of the school.
- October 29, 1982 Sister Margeen gave presentation to Episcopal Convention, St. Paul's Cathedral, Buffalo.
- November 3, 1982 The Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency voted to ask the City Housing Authority and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to rehabilitate the LaSalle Development housing area. Mayor O'Laughlin, Chairman of the Agency, estimated the cost would be approximately \$2 million to renovate the housing units which have been vacant for about two years.
- November 6, 1982 Sister Margeen, Rev. Brewster, and Roger Cook gave presentation and bus tour to United Church of Christ Board for Homeland Ministries.

November 11, 1982

About 25 Durez residents and ETF members attended a meeting with Niagara County health officials. Residents were given jars of phenol and formaldehyde to smell in order to be able to pinpoint odors they had been detecting in the neighborhood. A health official stated that the real problems in the neighborhood occurred in past years when air was highly contaminated and those problems would be manifested in the future (especially in children). He also indicated that the Niagara County Health Department ceased monitoring ambient air in the area in 1980 (due to lack of funds) even though DEC found evidence of highly toxic and carcinogenic chemical stack emissions from Durez in 1978 and 1979.

November 12, 1982

The United Church of Christ Board of Homeland Ministries urged all religious groups to join them in urging the State to conduct full and complete hearings on habitability of Love Canal.

November 14, 1982

Mr. Karl Sturtevant, a 64 year old Love Canal resident and retired engineer, has been appointed to fill the vacancy created by William Waggoner on the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency.

November 15, 1982

Residents of Deuro Drive and Mueller Court immediately adjacent to the Love Canal Declaration Area were awarded a 25% reduction in 1982 tax assessments.

November 17, 1982

DARA members and their attorney met with Attorney General Robert Abrams who stated his office was giving full attention to the Durez case.

Hooker officials held a meeting with Durez residents, ETF members, and local officials, at which they denied any responsibility for dioxin found off site of plant property. Company officials would not indicate how much dioxin is on site (it's part of the public record") and criticized the attorney General for taking an adversarial position.

November 18, 1982 Sister Margeen, Barbara Hanna, and Pat Brown gave presentation to St. Peter's Home and School Association, Lewiston, New York, on Lake Ontario Ordinance Works site.

November 27, 1982 Federal Judge John T. Curtin ruled that Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corp. may continue to drill wells to trace possible leaks from the Hyde Park landfill without starting air tests for toxic releases.

December 7, 1982 Colleen Zybala of DARA and an ETF representative met with Mr. Walter Hang from NYPIRG (New York Public Interest Research Group).

December 16, 1982 Buffalo News reports that State Attorney General Robert Abrams has advised the Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency to conduct public hearings and a full study of the environmental impact of resettling homes around Love Canal.

Ecumenical Task Force also called for an independent peer review of data and conclusions of the EPA Love Canal report and public hearings to be held in Niagara Falls.

December 20, 1982 College Heights Homeowners Association filed a motion in Federal Court to force Hooker to purchase their properties without restrictions on further legal action. (See June 21, 1982 entry.)

December 21, 1982 Maurice D. Hinchey, Chairman of the New York State Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee announced he will conduct hearings on the Love Canal EPA report on February 17, 1983.

January 3, 1983 Members of the Ecumenical Task Force, via special invitation, attended the inauguration of New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams.

January 5, 1983

Buffalo News reports that Senators Alfonse D'Amato and Daniel Patrick Moynihan have requested the Office of Technology Assessment to comment on the validity of earlier administration reports on the habitability issue of Love Canal. The Senators also asked the Office to determine whether remedial work at Love Canal is being done properly. This report is expected to be released in May.

January 11, 1983

ETF Board and Staff held an Evaluation Day to determine policy and objectives for coming year, at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Niagara Falls.

January 15, 1983

Niagara Gazette reports discovery of migrating underground chemicals 2,000 feet south of the Hyde Park landfill.

January 26, 1983

Officials of the State Health Department, the State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency met at Niagara University to discuss the cleanup project at the Hyde Park landfill with residents and students.

February 17, 1983

Maurice D. Hinchey, Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Environmental Conservation said the 400 vacant homes at Love Canal "should be condemned and no one allowed to move back into the area".

Testimony of Dr. Richard Cook, ETF Scientific Advisory Board Member, countered that of Dr. Richard T. Dewling, EPA Deputy Administrator. Dr. Dewling proposed that resettlement of Love Canal could start immediately on a limited basis, with the caution that work proceed quickly on remedial action and long-term monitoring to ensure the health and safety of new residents. Dr. Cook, an Associate Professor of Chemistry at Kalamazoo College, stated that a study of the EPA report convinced him that no conclusions about the long-term migration of chemicals into the outer rings can be made on the basis of the study and that no conclusions can be drawn about health effects.

February 22, 1983 Mr. David Lees, a reporter from Quest Magazine, Toronto, Ontario, spent two days in the ETF office to gather information, speak with residents, and visit the sites.

February 24, 1983 Mr. Allen Levy, a reporter from St. Louis, Missouri, visited the ETF office to become acquainted with the Love Canal situation and compare it to the recently discovered site in Times Beach, Missouri.

March 3, 1983 As a result of noxious vapors escaping from drilling well near the Hyde Park Landfill, the College Heights Homeowners Association again appealed for a full-time air monitoring program. DEC officials said that studies indicate that "any odors that are present have diminished within a reasonable distance from the snow fence."

March 9, 1983 Niagara Gazette reports an unanimous decision by Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency members to extend the deadline for families living in the Love Canal Declaration Area, thus giving owner occupants until October 1, 1984 to make a decision whether or not to sell their homes to LCARA.

March 11, 1983 ETF members and DARA representatives met with the new DEC Commissioner, Henry Williams, to apprise him of the Durez situation and request his aid in coming to a solution.

March 20, 1983 Rev. Norman Timmermann and Mrs. Therese Mudd, members of ETF Board of Directors, left today to spend two days in Times Beach, Missouri area to assess the situation and to speak to the clergy of the area about the possibility of forming their own ecumenical response.

March 21, 1983 ETF, Pollution Probe and Operation CLEAN Niagara of Canada, petitioned jointly to intervene in the federal-state suit against the Occidental Chemical Corp. and the City of Niagara Falls over the proposed settlement agreement for the clean up of the S-Area Landfill site.

March 28, 1983 Sister Margeen gave a presentation to the Department of Church and Society, United Church of Christ, Connecticut Conference in Hartford, Connecticut.

April 11, 1983 Students from the University of Western Ontario at London, Ontario, visited the ETF office.

April 13, 1983 Niagara Gazette reports that Senators Alfonse D'Amato and Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Congressman John J. LaFalce have asked the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to release all documents relating to the preparation and release of a controversial study on the Love Canal neighborhood.

April 15, 1983 Colleen Zybala of DARA and her family moved today from the Durez area after taking a substantial loss on their home.

April 21, 1983 Sister Margeen, Roger cook, Pat Brown, and Barbara Hanna attended the New York State Council of Churches Impact Briefing/Legislative Seminar in Albany, New York, where Sister Margeen gave a presentation.

April 23, 1983 Mrs. Therese Mudd and Mrs. Pat Brown gave a presentation at "Environmental Information - How To find", in Warren, Pennsylvania.

April 30, 1983 The environmental Defense Fund of Washington, D.C. released a three-year study involving 563 children living in the Declaration Area of Love Canal during 1980. This study revealed that the growth of children living in this area was stunted due to exposure to toxic chemicals. Dr. Beverly Paigen, co-author of the study, says the study establishes a link between six commonly reported illnesses and where the child resided.

May 17, 1983

The Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, released a report stating, "Residents or former residents of Love Canal are no more likely to have chromosomal damage than other residents of Niagara Falls." Scientists reached this conclusion after comparing blood samples of 46 Love Canal residents with those taken from 50 people living in other areas of Niagara Falls. The results were not compared with residents in other parts of the country.

May 25, 1983

State Attorney General Robert Abrams filed a \$30 million lawsuit against Occidental Chemical Corp. charging irresponsible chemical disposal practices at its Durez plant in North Tonawanda.

June 3, 1983

Ecumenical Task Force received 501(c)3 Federal Tax Exemption status from the Internal Revenue Service.

Supreme Court Justice Joseph P. Kuszynski dismissed 54 Love Canal lawsuits. 25 of the suits were dismissed because Love Canal residents moved from the area more than 3 years before the personal injury claims were filed. 12 other wrongful death claims were dismissed because the suits were not filed with a two-year time limit.

June 6, 1983

Sister Margeen, Pat Brown, and Barbara Hanna gave a presentation to Lutheran Church In America Convention in Cazenovia, New York.

June 7, 1983

The Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency voted to oppose proposed state legislation that would require another agency to certify the safety of the Love Canal area before any resettlement or other major rehabilitative move takes place.

June 8, 1983

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation demolished the 99th. Street School in the Love Canal.

June 23, 1983

A report released today by a bipartisan technical agency of Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, said the EPA report on Love Canal cannot be relied upon to justify immediate rehabilitation of the area.

A bill to extend, through 1989, a 25 percent property tax exemption for homeowners living near the Love Canal was passed by the State Senate.

Ms. Jane Ressler, Attorney At Law, visited the ETF office from Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania. Ms. Ressler is representing the residents of Cannonsburg in lawsuits arising from a nuclear waste dump site.

Sister Margeen and John Lynch appeared on AM Buffalo television to respond to the report released by the Office of Technology Assessment re the EPA Love Canal report.

Members of the ETF at its Annual Meeting voted unanimously to ask the New York State legislature to enact a five year moratorium on repopulation of the Love Canal neighborhood while additional studies are undertaken to find out whether the area is habitable.

July 7, 1983

ETF sponsored a public information meeting on the report by the Office of Technology Assessment on the EPA Love Canal report. Dr. Joel S. Hirschhorn, chief author and project director of the Love Canal Case Study for the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, addressed the public and answered questions.

Sister Margeen attended and gave a presentation at a Hazards Workshop, sponsored by the University of Colorado at Boulder, Co.

July 22, 1983

Construction of an underground containment wall around the Love Canal was suspended today. Tests revealed chemicals had migrated past the proposed location of the wall.

- August 1, 1983 ETF moved into its new "home" at St. Mary of the Cataract Rectory, 259 Fourth Street, Niagara Falls, New York.
- August 10, 1983 David B. Twedell, the government's expert geologist in the Hyde Park landfill case, has been indicted by a federal grand jury on 14 counts of perjury and fraud for allegedly posing as an expert "hydrologist". (see December 1, 1981 entry).
- August 25, 1983 Occidental tests at the Hyde Park Landfill reveal that chemicals in groundwater have migrated southwest, northeast - toward the Niagara River - and east from the disposal site.
- September 6, 1983 A four year study by Dr. John H. Christian, a professor of population biology at the State University of New York in Binghamton reveals: Field mice living near the Love Canal have reduced lifespans and show signs of chemical poisonings.
- September 9, 1983 Several members of the ETF Board of Directors and Staff met with Mr. Charles Caccia, Minister of the Environment for Canada, to discuss the toxic waste pollution problems along the Niagara River and Lake Ontario.
- September 27, 1983 The United States Environmental Protection Agency admitted its 1982 Love Canal report was seriously flawed and has proposed doing an entirely new habitability study. Decisions about whether the homes are safe to live in will be delayed between 1.5 and 4.5 more years under a proposal EPA has made to state officials.
- Sister Margeen and Barbara Hanna visited Times Beach, Missouri as consultants to the Ecumenical Dioxin Response Task Force in their response to the victims of toxic waste in that area.

September 29, 1983 ETF Board Member, Sr. Joan Malone, O.S.F., debated the head of the EPA Waste Management Division on ABC-TV's Good Morning America on behalf of the victims of Love Canal.

September 30, 1983 Dr. John Deegan Jr., former Director of the 1982 Environmental Protection Agency's Habitability Study revealed he had warned top level EPA officials repeatedly of the inadequacies of the \$8 million study.

October 10, 1983 Sister Margeen spoke at a public information meeting on potential hazards at the Hyde Park Landfill, at the invitation of the College Heights Property Owners Association.

Lawyers representing 1,345 people from Love Canal and the Occidental Petroleum Corporation have reached a tentative out-of-court settlement in suits over contamination. Occidental Petroleum Corporation has agreed to pay \$20 million. Homeowners and other families sought a total of \$15 billion.

October 12, 1983 Occidental Petroleum Corporation said insurance carriers for the Niagara Falls School Board, the City and Niagara County will pay a share of the proposed \$20 million out-of-court Love Canal settlement.

October 30, 1983 The consulting firm of Malcolm Pirnie Inc. recommended to the Department of Environmental Conservation that \$2.4 million in remedial work be authorized to remove chemical contamination of Black and Bergholtz Creeks in the Love Canal Emergency Declaration Area.

November 1, 1983 Occidental Chemical Corp. requested permission from the Town of Niagara to build a temporary storage facility at the Hyde Park dump to hold chemical wastes leaking from the site. Town officials declined to act on the request until they are given more information about the proposed storage.

November 16, 1983

ETF Board Members, Staff, and local citizens testified at joint public hearings conducted in Buffalo, New York by the Assembly Committee on Health and the Assembly Committee on Environmental Conservation.

December 8, 1983

The United States Justice Department filed a lawsuit to recover \$45 million in federal money spent to clean up Love Canal and relocate residents. Acting for the United States Environmental Protection Agency, government attorneys also asked the court to hold Occidental Chemical Corporation liable for all future expenditures in containing toxic and hazardous wastes that have migrated from the canal area into nearby homes.

December 8, 1983

Agreement is reached between attorneys for the U.S. government and Occidental Chemical Corp. in clean-up plan for S-Area landfill. Approval must now be sought from the City of Niagara Falls, the State Departments of Health and Environmental Engineering and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency.

December 9, 1983

The City Council of Niagara Falls unanimously approved the out-of-court settlement agreement of the S-Area lawsuit.

December 13, 1983

A public meeting was held at Love Canal to explain a new hazardous waste treatment process invented by Thomas Barton of Kingston, Ontario. Barton's system called "plasma arc" uses electricity to destroy wastes at temperatures approaching 50,000 degrees Celsius. The State Department of Environmental Conservation will use the process at Love Canal if tests prove successful.

December 31, 1983

Buffalo News reports that toxic chemicals from the Hyde Park dump have permeated a square mile of underground soil and bedrock in Niagara Falls and Lewiston, according to records on file with the State Department of Environmental Conservation. The exact threat posed by the underground migration remains unknown, according to officials.

January 9, 1984

Former Environmental Protection Agency official, Rita Lavelle, was sentenced to six months in prison and fined \$10,000. for lying to Congress.

January 20, 1984

Results from the latest environmental testing by Occidental Chemical Corp. at its Durez plant show "no health risk to the plant's neighbors and employees," the company announced.

January 23, 1984

Congressman John J. LaFalce issued a strong request to EPA Administrator William D. Ruckelshaus demanding that he approve a request for \$4 million to purchase the remaining homes around the Love Canal.

David B. Twedell, who pleaded guilty to testifying with fraudulent credentials in the Hyde Park landfill case, is sentenced in U. S. District Court to a year in federal prison. (See August 10, 1983 entry.)

January 24, 1984

State environmental officials stated that 25 percent of the most seriously contaminated toxic waste dump sites in the state are located in Western New York. The heaviest concentration of sites in New York State is in Erie and Niagara Counties, where 30 of the 144 most polluted sites are located. State Environmental Commissioner Henry G. Williams said the 144 sites are considered to pose a "significant" threat to health or the environment.

The Environmental Facilities Corp. denied a request by Occidental Petroleum Corp. for \$20 million in tax-free bonds to finance the cleanup of the Hyde Park Landfill.

Sister Margeen is interviewed by National Public Radio program "All Things Considered" regarding the toxic waste sites in this area.

February 8, 1984 Buffalo News reports that Occidental Chemical Corp. executives have been asked to explain a spill that dumped 100 gallons of contaminated liquids at the site of its cleanup operation at the Hyde Park Landfill and to explain why it failed to report the incident in a timely manner. The spill occurred on January 21, 1984.

February 9, 1984 Several ETF Board Members and Sister Margeen testified at State Superfund Management Board hearings on "Inactive Hazardous Waste Remedial Plan".

February 10, 1984 The Province of Ontario is granted intervenor status in the proposed settlement of the S-Area lawsuit.

February 14, 1984 The Love Canal Area Revitalization Agency voted to demolish 30 houses east of the canal in the third ring of the declaration area.

February 15, 1984 Sister Margeen gave presentation at Western New York Council On Occupational Safety and Health.

February 17, 1984 State Attorney General office demands more information on chemical contamination at the Occidental Chemical Corp. Durez plant before the state will approve a cleanup plan for the site.

February 25, 1984 Buffalo News reports that federal and state officials have asked Occidental to drill more test wells to pinpoint the extent of migration outward from the Hyde Park Landfill and downward into bedrock layers deep beneath the dump.

February 27, 1984 The Niagara Falls City Council voted unanimously to accept a recommended settlement of Love Canal damage claims brought by residents. (See October 10th. and 12th. 1983 entries.)

March 2, 1984

The \$20 million Love Canal damage settlement, whose terms have been kept secret until today under a court order, will set aside up to \$1 million for a lifetime medical trust for 1,336 Love Canal residents. The trust funds will be used to cover diagnosis and treatment of any latent but canal-related illnesses that occur during the lifetime of those accepting the out-of-court settlement.

March 13, 1984

U.S. District Judge John T. Curtin denied ETF and its joint applicants intervenor status in state and federal lawsuits against Occidental Chemical Corp. over the S-Area chemical dump. (See March 21, 1983 entry.)

March 14, 1984

State and federal officials, local residents and members of the press accompanied eight scientists on a bus tour of the Love Canal neighborhood. These scientists were selected by Health and Human Services and the State Department of Health to advise the Technical Review Committee on criteria and methods to be used in studying Love Canal data and permit the State Commissioner of Health to make a final determination on habitability of the canal area.

Rev. Dr. James Brewster of the ETF Board of Directors gave presentation for the Department of Pediatrics, College of Medicine, Upstate Medical Center, Syracuse, New York.

March 20, 1984

Town of Niagara officials met with representatives from Occidental Chemical Corp. and the State Department of Environmental Conservation to discuss temporary storage of chemical wastes from the Hyde Park Landfill. (See November 1, 1983 entry.)

March 21, 1984

The State Department of Environmental Conservation has postponed the cleanup of chemical contamination in Black and Bergholtz creeks until 1985.

April 6-9, 1984

ETF Staff attends second statewide meeting of the Conference on the Health Hazards of Synthetics in Albany, New York. Sister Margeen & Mary Cahill addressed the Toxic Victims Coalition on the subject of Community Organizing.

April 11, 1984

ETF, Pollution Probe and Operation CLEAN Niagara filed a joint appeal of the ruling by U.S. District court Judge John T. Curtin denying intervenor status in the hearing that will determine whether the judge will permit the proposed cleanup of the S-Area dump.

April 20, 1984

The Occidental Chemical Corp. paid a \$500 fine - half the amount sought by the State Department of environmental Conservation - to settle an unreported spill at the Hyde Park dump remedial cleanup site. (See February 8, 1984 entry.)

April 30, 1984

Hearings began in U.S. District court, Buffalo, N.Y., on the settlement agreement for the proposed cleanup of the S-Area dump.

May 1, 1984

The Town of Niagara Board postponed action on Occidental Chemical Corp.'s request to install storage tanks at the Hyde Park landfill until questions of worker safety and emergency responses are resolved. (See March 20, 1984 entry.)

May 2, 1984

State Health Commissioner David Axelrod told Love Canal residents, former residents and area taxpayers, that a decision on habitability of the Love Canal area would be made before the end of the year. The habitability guidelines developed by a panel of scientists (see March 14th. 1984 entry) would be applied one at a time to each house within the area.

May 3, 1984

Hearings concluded in U.S. District Court, Buffalo, New York, on the settlement agreement for the proposed cleanup of the S-Area dump, with final arguments to be made May 31, 1984.

May 10, 1984

Judge Joseph P. Kuszynski, State Supreme Court, began hearing claims by the first of 1,367 former and current residents of the Love Canal area. The process of evaluating all the claims is expected to continue through the end of the year. (See March 2nd, 1984 entry)

May 29, 1984

ETF Annual Meeting held at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Niagara Falls.

June 12, 1984

Town of Niagara Board denied the request by Occidental Chemical Corp. to bring temporary storage tanks onto the Hyde Park Landfill site, on the grounds that the State and Federal environmental officials had not convinced the Board the tanks would safely contain highly toxic chemicals from the dump. (See May 1, 1984 entry.)

June 21, 1984

Dr. Richard T. Dewling has been named acting regional administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region II office in New York City, succeeding Jacqueline E. Schafer. As deputy administrator, Dr. Dewling was chosen by Washington officials to oversee the \$8 million Love Canal environmental study that led to an initial approval, later renounced, of the habitability of homes in the Love Canal.

June 27, 1984

Niagara Gazette reports that Occidental Chemical Corp. will apply for permission to burn toxic chemicals, including PCBs and dioxin, from the Hyde Park Landfill in the company's Buffalo Avenue plant incinerator, within two weeks. Occidental has a temporary permit from the Environmental Protection Agency to burn hazardous waste in its Niagara Plant incinerator, but is not authorized to incinerate the highly toxic Hyde Park chemicals. EPA recently notified Occidental that an incinerator would have to be capable of destroying 99.9999 percent of PCBs and dioxin to burn Hyde Park wastes.

- July 4, 1984 The U.S. Department of Justice will ask federal Judge John T. Curtin to order the Town of Niagara to allow Occidental Chemical Corp. to bring temporary storage tanks onto its Hyde Park Landfill. (See June 12, 1984 entry.)
- July 18, 1984 Plans to bury 450 barrels of sludge containing high levels of dioxin into the top of Love Canal commencing tomorrow were disclosed during a Love Canal Technical Review Committee meeting as a result of citizen questions.
- July 19, 1984 The Ecumenical Task Force contacted DEC Commissioner Henry Williams regarding the proposed burial of toxic sludge into the Love Canal proper. As a result, the Commissioner stopped the burial until the public has a chance to comment on the procedure.
- July 25, 1984 Buffalo News reports that U.S. District Judge John T. Curtin was informed today that Occidental Chemical Corp. is storing leachate with 20,000 parts per billion of dioxin in the Hyde Park Landfill area.
- July 31, 1984 Norman H. Nosenchuck, State Director of Solid and Hazardous Waste, announced during a public meeting regarding the burial of 450 drums of dioxin-laden sludge into Love Canal, that the burial has been indefinitely postponed. Even with the announcement of the postponement, citizens lashed out at state and federal officials, accusing them of ignoring public concerns, hiding the drum-burial decision, misleading the residents and relying on out-of-date technology. Mr. Nosenchuck assured the public: No future Love Canal decision will be made without the full involvement of local citizens.
- August 3, 1984 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator William D. Ruckelshaus denied a request from Congressman John Lafalce for \$4 million to buy vacant homes and other property in the Love Canal area. (See January 23, 1984 entry.)

August 7, 1984

U.S. District Judge John Curtin ordered the Niagara Town Board to allow Occidental Chemical Corp. to bring temporary storage tanks for chemical waste to the Hyde Park Landfill. (See July 4, 1984 entry.)

August 8, 1984

Tests by the State Department of Environmental Conservation revealed toxic chemicals in water seeping from the Niagara River Gorge northwest of the Hyde Park chemical dump.

August 18, 1984

Buffalo News reports that chemical wastes from Occidental Chemical Corp's Hyde Park dump are leaking from a second point in the Niagara River gorge wall, according to State Officials.