

Just
Say
you heard
it
through
the

Viva VINE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VIVA VEGIE SOCIETY
Edited by Pamela Teisler



'beef machine') in the U.S. Today, we are targeting McDonald's because they are the most visible. It is a strategic move. We know that if McDonald's puts a veggie burger on its menu all the other fast food restaurants will do the same.

We're asking: 'What is the *health* impact of 85 billion hamburgers sold?' Our meat-centered diet is nearly irrefutably tied to heart disease, cancer, stroke, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, and most of the diseases that we are suffering from in western society.

We're asking: 'What is the *environmental* impact of 85 billion hamburgers sold?' Our meat centered diet is turning the glorious breadbasket of our midwestern states into a dessert, and our rivers and streams into stagnant waters.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE VIVAVINE

For \$5./yr., receive 5 bi-monthly issues (no Jul./Aug. issue) plus a complimentary copy of "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian" and your very own personal membership card to The VivaVegie Society.

Cash or check with your request should be sent to:
The VivaVegie Society, Prince St. Sta., P.O. Box 294,
New York, NY 10012

NYC Kicks Off Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign

APRIL 17 WAS THE NATIONWIDE kick-off date for the Beyond Beef Coalition's Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign. In New York City, about 125 people came to Madison Square Park at 23rd St. and Fifth Ave. in Manhattan that Saturday to show support and/or pick up their materials for the campaign. House of Tempeh, a local jazz band, provided "vegetarian sounds," and Whole Earth Bakery, a local "institution," provided the fine baked goods and veggie fixings, most of which were vegan.

Think about it ... could this have been the first-ever *demonstration* about food? But food will be the issue of the nineties, or so predicts Jeremy Rifkin, the brainchild of the Beyond Beef Coalition who, from Washington D.C., orchestrated Adopt-A-McDonald's. What, with food irradiation, growth hormone and antibiotic injections in food animals, genetic engineering, and deadly bacteria in meat and poultry, Rifkin just may have a point.

Following is what Pamela Teisler, the New York City coordinator of the Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign, had to say at the microphone at the rally. (She also had the opportunity to read a similar tract on WBAI, a local radio station, just days before the April 17th rally.)

"The Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign was started to urge McDonald's Corporation (specifically) to put a veggie burger on its menu, at all 9,000 outlets in the U.S. Today, we're asking, 'what is the *real cost* of 85 billion hamburgers sold,' which McDonald's boasts of? McDonald's is today the biggest single promoter and greatest benefactor of the beef culture (or what I would call the

Calendar

Wed., June 2: SURVIVAL INTO THE 21ST CENTURY, AN ENVIRONMENTAL EVENING 7:30 p.m., Rockland Community College; call Anne Muller @ (914)429-8733 for more information. Sun., June 20: VEGAN SOCIETY OF QUEENS POTLUCK (an ongoing event for 7 years now, thanks to Hubert Davis), 2:00 p.m., Forest Park; call Hubert at (718) 263-7160 for more information. Tues, June 22: EARTHSAVE VEGAN POTLUCK, 6:30 pm, Greenpeace offices, 462 B'way @ Grand St, 6th Fl; bring a tasty veg. dish; no dairy; and please bring an index card listing ingredients. Call 212/978-4338 to confirm.

Schedule to distribute "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian" in VivaVegie-style vegetarian street advocacy (call ahead, (212)966-2060, to confirm, and to arrange meeting location): Sat., June 19: MERMAID PARADE, 3:00 p.m., Coney Island. Sun., July 4: INDEPENDENCE DAY, 1:00 p.m., South Street Seaport. (No August VivaVegie actions are planned at present. Please note that The VivaVegie Society frequently goes out with its street advocacy on short notice. Do not hesitate to call to learn of unscheduled events. (212) 966-2060.)

We plan, with this campaign, to expose the beef industry. We are simply concerned citizens. We are disturbed by information that is seeping out; that inspection of meat (and poultry) is virtually non-existent; that animal cruelty is virtually institutional; that the beef industry is utterly subsidized by the U.S. taxpayer (and what are we getting in return?). We want to expose the shameful fact that only a small amount of grain that is fed to beef cattle today could tomorrow alleviate all the hunger in the world. We are concerned about contaminants in meat (pesticide concentrations, hormone and antibiotic additives, and deadly bacterias). We are going to be exposing the facts about bovine growth hormone, which is a genetically engineered substance about to be approved by the FDA.

We are showing the world, today, that people will get out there. We are here to press the issue with the media that they need to begin doing their job. The mainstream media needs to begin investigating the beef and poultry industries. They need to go into the slaughter houses, to the stockyards, to the feedlot, into the layer hen house, into the dairy factory, and to farmers' fields that have become lifeless from overuse of pesticides and fertilizers.

Whether anyone likes it or not, we as activists are going to be out there exposing the *hidden costs* (those intangible costs) of our meat and poultry-centered diets.

Continued on page 2

Now if you had asked a person who smoked about his or her smoking habit in 1955, let's say, he or she might have said, "I'm not hurting anybody else." Well, we know differently now. We've got health care costs and secondary smoke that we know about now related to smoking. The fact of the matter is, the same thing goes for beef and poultry. Having a meat-centered diet is not just a peculiar habit which has no effect upon anyone else. Our food choices have a profound impact on others. It's not always apparent at first glance. But when you look carefully at the issue you see that having a meat-centered diet is in fact a costly, destructive and selfish lifestyle. And the people with meat-centered diets are not paying the *real* price for their habit.

People who are aware and who do not share this habit, this lifestyle, are concerned. And angry. But until now, there was no public way to join with others and show it.

I thank everyone here for coming out early [10:30 a.m.] this morning on your day off [Saturday]. You have made an incredibly important statement!"

Future projects of The VivaVeggie Society: Target: Michael Jordan -- a post card campaign. Let's help this incredible athlete to get some facts straight about health, ie.: the veg way. Let's get Michael to stop endorsing hamburgers and eating hot dogs on tv. The V.V.S. needs your ideas as well as your donations for printing and publicity. Write: The VivaVeggie Society, Prince Street Sta., P.O. Box 294, New York, NY 10012.

To Do Nothing Would Suggest Our Complicity

In Maryland, on May 1, United Poultry Concerns sponsored its Third Annual Spring Mourning Vigil for Chickens. This year, UPC targeted Country Fair Farms, Maryland's newest battery hen complex. Located in the town of Westminster, Country Fair holds half a million hens in four windowless buildings. The vigil concluded with a peaceful march down Main Street in Westminster, past Western Maryland College, with banners, posters and leaflets, drawing public attention to the horrendous suffering of battery-caged hens. To become a member of United Poultry Concerns, send \$15 to United Poultry Concerns, P.O. Box 59367, Potomac, MD 20859. Contact UPC to sponsor a similar vigil in your town. Call (301) 948-2406 for more information. And in the meantime, stop eating eggs!

A Story Buried; But Seeds Have Been Planted

Even though the New York City press virtually ignored the local rally that kicked off the Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign sponsored by Beyond Beef, THE INCREDIBLE ISSUES THAT BEYOND BEEF IS BRINGING OUT ARE SLOWLY REACHING THE MAINSTREAM . . . True, the New York City press just didn't come out for our rally in Madison Square Park. They didn't come out, EVEN THOUGH the rally ushered in a new era in public concern; EVEN THOUGH from our rally we launched teams of leafletters to 25 McDonald's locations; EVEN THOUGH we had about 125 people show up, many at 10:30 a.m. on a Saturday; EVEN THOUGH the campaign was a national event; and EVEN THOUGH the local office of the Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign sent out nearly 100 press releases to the local as well as the national media.

Still, despite the snub, the Beyond Beef Campaign has had an extraordinary impact. The mainstream press is in fact taking notice of the dangers and health hazards of meat and poultry.

Case in point: the current issue of Newsweek, May 24, 1993 (in spite of itself), has published a scathing indictment of animal foods from the standpoint of contamination. *The VivaVine* could not have been more scathing!

Other victories include the distinct possibility of labeling of the likely-to-be-approved bovine growth hormone, BSI, no doubt largely due to public distrust of the genetically engineered substance that when administered to cows boosts milk production by 10% to 25%. The Beyond Beef Campaign has been highly instrumental in building awareness of the bovine growth hormone issue.

And, it is just incredible how many articles are coming out about the benefits of eating more plant foods, especially those green and yellow veggies, and less animal foods. The New York Times ran a fabulous article in its Science Times section in its April 13 issue. The article sang the praises of plant foods as being the foods of great healing powers.

So why didn't the press come to our rally in Madison Square Park? One activist who said she has had a lot of experience with the press asked right back, "Why should they have? All we have is a petition drive. There are 10 animal rights organizations doing things all the time around New York City. Why should they look at this action? Now, if you had people blocking

traffic in the middle of Fifth Avenue, then the press would have come out. You have to remember you're dealing with New York City. Things are different here. There are just too many stories competing with this one."

Other sources said, more cynically, that they have proof that reporters were told by higher ups at the Networks to block-out the story of the Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign. Reporters got the word from "on-high" that they were simply not to cover or run stories about the campaign. (Given that we had a black-out of the story in New York City gives credence to this theory.)

Understandably, immediately after the April 17th rally, many in the Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign and The VivaVeggie Society felt that the anti-McDonald's effort might have been all for nothing. But now, a good month later, with the meat and poultry industry on the run from some pretty good media exposés, things seem to be looking up.

Without question, the E. coli epidemic in Seattle in January of this year has also played into the hands of Beyond Beef. Beyond Beef won a suit earlier in May requiring that all meat and poultry in the U.S. be sold with labels giving handling instructions -- instructions such as, wash hands after touching meat, and keep raw meat away from foods to be eaten raw. (To Rifkin, the victory is only a start, and vows to go back to court if the labels do not include *warnings* of the potential for harmful, and even deadly, bacteria being present inside the product.)

It could very well be that there *was* a blackout on news about the Madison Square Park kickoff rally. But the Beyond Beef message will not be silenced. Localized versions of the official Beyond Beef press release went out to media points all over the country (not just NYC) from hundreds of individuals and coalitions nationwide. These press releases, it happens, worked to give more information than just time and place of various local events. They included a rundown of the issues. A lot of people in the media, all over the country, have read our message. And now it is clear. The great advertiser McDonald's may have been promised by top media executives that the Adopt-A-McDonald's story would be buried in New York City, but it seems likely now that no other promises were made.

Three Veggie Conferences Spanning Coast to Coast

The North American Vegetarian Society Summerfest

Bryant College, Smithfield, RI July 21-25

For fun; for everyone. Singles, couples, families. Enjoy the music, the exercise, the dancing and the healthful, totally vegetarian food.

At the conference, hear prominent vegetarians, experts in nutrition and alternative health care, as well as activists and theorists for animal rights and the environment.

Featured guests include Dr. Neal Barnard, Dr. Michael Klaper, New York City's own Lorna Sass, Gary Francione and Brother Ron Pickarski and many, many others.

Please direct all correspondence to NAVS, Box 72, Dolgeville, NY 13329. Call (518)568-7970.

American Vegan Society VUNA Congress

4th Biennial Congress

of the Vegetarian Union of North America
which includes the 33rd Annual Convention
of the American Vegan Society

Lewis & Clark College, Port., Ore. August 4-8

Here is the first major vegetarian conference to be held in the Pacific Northwest.

Featured speakers include Dr. Michael Klaper, Alex Hershaft, H. Jay Dinshah, Brother Ron Pickarski and New York City's own Rynn Berry as well as many, others.

For details, contact: The American Vegan Society, 501 Old Harding Hwy, Malaga, NJ 08328. Call (609) 694-2887.

The Vegetarian Resource Group Canoe Trip and Veg. Vacation

Shenandoah Mountains, Vir. July 8 - 11

Join with the Vegetarian Resource Group for their annual summer gathering. Take in some of the most beautiful scenery in the area on a canoe trip down the Shenandoah River. You will take a leisurely-paced, five hour, 12 mile trip through gentle whitewater. Meet new friends, enjoy the scenery, eat vegan meals and take part in educational discussion groups. You will be just minutes away from the scenic Skyline Drive along the Blue Ridge Mountains and world famous Luray Cavers. Families, singles and couples all welcome.

Contact: The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. (410) 366-VEGE

grapevine

letters from readers

Dear Pamela: It was a pleasure to make my contribution toward the success of your [Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign kick-off] RALLY at Fifth Avenue and 23rd St. on April 17, if only by my presence in your audience. You are to be commended for the work you are doing to publicize the vegetarian way of life. This comes to you from a youthful 93-year nonagenarian who has been a complete vegetarian for 53 years, enjoying good health and who is still galavanting around ... Pamela, you are the David fighting the Goliath, and yet, your "Beyond Beef" campaign, directed at McDonald's, benefited the multi-million dollar corporate giant immeasurably by the advertising of its name. Why not send them a nice letter explaining that you are actually helping them and that your activity should be worthy of compensation by them. Ask them, "Would you then consider sending us a check for a thousand dollars to help us defray the expense of conducting this campaign?"

Sincerely, as always, Louis Warter

(Ed. note: Louis, The letter is out. I will let you and VivaVine readers in on the outcome when I get it. -Pamela)

Dear Pamela: Have you encountered people who when urged to eat plants instead of animals counter with the "fact" that plants are conscious and experience pain? The basis for this view stems (excuse my pun) from the book *The Secret Life of Plants* which was based on work published by Cleve Backster in 1968. Well, recently I came across the enclosed article from *The Skeptical Inquirer* by John M. Kmetz (page 57-61 of the Spring/Summer,

1978 issue). Mr. Kmetz, it happens, attempted to replicate Backster's results. He found no evidence of plant consciousness. Others before Kmetz (R. Johnson and K.A. Horowitz, 1975), also, have attempted to replicate Backster's results with negative out-

comes. It appears that Backster's work claiming consciousness for plants was flawed in its methodology and conclusion - Mike Hudak, Binghamton, NY

(Ed. Note: Yes, Mike. I have been countered with the argument that plants have feelings many times! It's

just one more of those things that makes you want to scream for sanity. I have tried my best to argue with people on the point. But, have never had any documentation before to back me up. I usually just retreated from the argument by telling people that if they were concerned about plants because they believed that they had feelings, then the mere fact that animals first have to consume huge amounts of plant food before they are eaten gives inexorable power to the argument for vegetarianism. So, Mike, the Kmetz essay you sent me is, at this point, absolutely invaluable. It was quite esoteric, albeit, but thankfully short. I'd like to quote from the last paragraph of it as it is most revealing.) ... QUOTING FROM MR. KMETZ' ESSAY: "It is unfortunate that the popular press has taken Backster's experiments and presented the results to the public in such a way that many people now believe plants can do something that, in fact, they cannot. The press, for the most part, never mentions that articles on the Backster effect are based on observations of only seven plants. Perhaps they need to be reminded, again, that they are making exaggerated claims from an experiment that no one, including Backster, by his own refusal to do so, has been able to replicate."

The VivaVine welcomes letters, articles of interest, manuscripts and graphics, for publication or reference. Deadline for submissions for next issue is August 10. The VivaVine always needs help at mailing time. Next issue is due the end of August.

Good Folks, Get to Know Them

Deja Shoes: Looking for non-leather shoes? Better yet, looking for non-leather shoes made from recycled materials? Deja Shoes made their debut in New York City this year at Earth Day in Bryant Park. And once you got past the crowds around their booth, you found out that the stylish and sturdy shoes cluttering their table came from old milk jugs, soda bottles, polystyrene cups, diaper manufacturing trim, tire rubber, coffee filters, magazines and cardboard as well as wetsuit trim waste. That is, garbage! And they looked, oh so chic! The story of the woman who started business, Julie Lewis, is also quite inspiring. After bucking the odds, winning a grant, and doggedly pursuing the technology, the business agreements, the rubbish and a prototype, Ms. Lewis now markets through such outlets as Canal Jeans, Barney's and Blooming's (subliminal message #83: avoid Bloomingdales; they still sell

fur). Five percent of Deja's pre-tax profits is pledged to the Species Survival Commission of the World Conservation Union. Their motto is one we all need to heed:

"Recycle and conserve resources, conserve resources and protect habitats, protect habitats and save species."

To contact Deja Shoes, call (503)624-7443; or write: DEJA, 7320 S.W. Hunziker, Suite 305, Tigard, Ore. 97223.

Vegetarian Gourmet: Vegetarians can always use a "come-back" when we take the needling, "So, what on earth do you eat?" Keep a copy of *Vegetarian Gourmet* with you, and say no more. Just open the magazine with over 100 recipes and flip the pages to stop the "Yahoos" in their tracks. And now, VG is answering the call for vegan cuisine. For a year's subscription in the U.S., send \$12.95 to *Vegetarian Gourmet*, Chitra Publications, 2 Public Ave., Montrose, PA 18801.

So, what is The VivaVeggie Society?

The VivaVeggie Society takes vegetarian advocacy to the streets. VivaVeggie advocates confront Mr. and Ms. Pedestrian to get the facts out about their healthful, ethical and environmentally conscious vegetarian diet.

Advocates assemble where there is plenty of pedestrian traffic. They come equipt with brightly-colored T-shirts with vegetarian messages, and plenty of fact-filled information. Founder Pamela Teisler wears the outfit shown on the reverse side of this newsletter. The mission? To distribute, for donation, the flyer, "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian," written by Pamela Teisler and inspired by John Robbins' book, *Diet for a New America*. The VivaVeggie Society has been, and will be in the future, involved with various projects such as **World Vegetarian Day** and the **Adopt-A-McDonald's** campaign. Donations can be sent to: The VivaVeggie Society, Prince St. Sta., P.O. Box 294, New York, NY 10012. Call 212/966-2060.

To obtain a copy of "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian," send \$1 (plus self addressed stamped envelope) for one copy. Additional copies come postage paid. Send 50¢ for each *additional* copy; \$20 for 50 copies; and \$35 for 100 copies. Write c/o: The VivaVeggie Society, address, below.

To the following people for their help on the **Adopt-A-McDonald's Campaign** . . . *Special thanks go out to: Leon Gruenbaum (with special gratitude);* also, Rochelle Goldman, Jesse Silverman, Bob Morris, Dennis Law, Hubert Davis, Alice Marie Codling, Karen Birg, Jean Thaler, Ashley, and Kenny Laufer. *Thanks to:* Manny Goldman, Karl Monroe, Debby Stromberg, Laurie Pollack, Greg Christopher, Pat Mezzullo, Lee Gross, Susan Rothman, Barry Hartglass, Ron Montano, Randy Fredericks, Neal Scoones, Gloria Stevenson, Dr. Jay Mancini, Sam Weinreb, Donna Blaszczyk, Dennis Johnsen, Jay and Susan Civic, Michael Hudak, Linda Orfield, Chris Shaffer, Paul Lamarca, Emily Ready, Eleanor Townsend, Naomi Smith, Robert Greene, Cristina A. Suzuki, Haley Rima, Sarah Corning, Joyce Ghosh, Elizabeth Coleville, Ella Pearlman, Adella Pisarevsky, Diane Durkowski, Tony White, Carrie Dugans, Elgin Eckert, Jeff Kleinbard, Adam Ardelle, and Michael Caracushanski (*Ed. note: My apologies to anyone I missed.*)

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