

Let's Be Well, Inc  
Summer 2006

## ink spots: opinions, news, and reviews from an inkjet

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"Today the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the beautiful places we visit are under increasing threat from corporate abuses....Currently 2,740 children die each day drinking or using unsafe water...[T]hrough our new campaign targeting the \$55 billion bottled water industry, we are joining with international and US allies to block corporate schemes that threaten to turn water into a costly boutique commodity." *Corporate Accountability in Action*, Spring 2005.

### Should water be a fundamental right—or a profit-driven commodity?

Whenever I see someone with a bottle of water, instead of a soft drink, I have mixed feelings. If you read our newsletters, you know how I feel about soda, diet or otherwise. Yes, drinking water is certainly better for that person than "liquid candy," as the Center for Science in the Public Interest calls it, but, whose water is he or she drinking?

If you read the same magazines I do, you probably don't buy Dasani or Aquafina. Here's why:

Gigi Kellet, writing in "Think Outside the Bottle," a publication of Corporate Accountability International, begins: "Half of all Americans today drink bottled water. What most of us don't realize is that more than 25% of bottled water comes from the tap, including leading brands like Coke's Dasani and Pepsi's Aquafina. Yet, studies have shown that bottled water is no safer than tap water—and sometimes it is less safe.

"What's worse, these corporations are charging 1,000 times more than we pay for tap water, and more than milk or gas costs. Why is this happening?"

Patti Lynn, in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, said, "Corporations are out to turn water—a fundamental human right—into a profit-driving commodity."

Kellet continues: "Increasingly, corporations

are taking control of a natural resource that should be shared by all of us as a basic human right. These same corporations place bottling plants in America and in developing countries and siphon off community supplies."

India has 16% of the world's population but only 4% of global water sources. I mentioned last quarter that there have been protests in cities in India where Coca-Cola is taking the local water for its bottling plant. Here are the details:

"Imagine that you are a farmer in Plachimada, India, barely making ends meet, and only growing enough to feed your family. Then, imagine that the water level in your village has dropped sharply, drained by a new bottling plant operated by Coke, the world's largest soft drink seller.

"In communities across India, from Plachimada to Mehdiganj, Coke is siphoning massive amounts of water, causing crop devastation and terrible consequences for people already suffering from diseases linked to reduced access to water."

Corporate Accountability, an organization to which I belong, co-sponsored a US speaking tour for Dr Sandeep Pandey, a convener of the National Alliance of People's Movements. He traveled to more than 20 cities from Atlanta to Minneapolis

to Boston, speaking to community and student groups, asking them to join him in a campaign to tell Coca-Cola to "Stop Stealing Water."

If I were a Coke shareholder, or even a consumer of Coke or Dasani, I would pressure Coke's CEO Neville Isdell to pay attention to this mass movement in India and show compassion for those who are poor enough without having to fight for their water.

But it's not just Coke. Corporations like Pepsi and Nestlé "are damaging our environment and making huge profits off us—all the while undermining public water systems we depend on."

Corporate Accountability has sent field organizers to eight US cities, including San Francisco, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Seattle, educating and mobilizing at the grassroots level. Utilizing their own blindfolded taste test, they are challenging those who hear them to take their "Tap Water Challenge" to see if they can discern between pricey bottled water and water from the tap.

The problem is bigger than soft drink bottlers in India, and an order of nuns in Huntington, Indiana, is also working to defend water as a basic human right. Sister Joan, Coordinator of Social Justice for Our Lady of Victory Noll Missionary

Sisters, says that "efforts to defend water...are fully in line with the mission of our congregation to protect the vulnerable and [to] preserve the dignity of people worldwide."

One of their members, Sr. Melanie Persche, was in Cochabamba, Bolivia, when public riots broke out against the privatization of the city's water system. The protest was successful, and the case serves as "an important touchstone and rallying cry for similar worldwide struggle."

It should not be necessary to organize "uprisings," to protect something as basic as water. Less than .08 % of earth's water supply is available for human use. All God's children should be stewards of the earth and take a stand to protect the poor from the \$55 billion bottled water industry that is usurping their right to clean and adequate water. According to "Our Thirsty Planet—Are We Approaching a Global Water Crisis?" in Dick's magazine, *The Lion*, 2.5 million people live in areas without sufficient water to meet their needs. More than one billion people still use unsafe sources of drinking water. To request post cards to make your voice heard on this issue, you may want to contact Ms ZandraRice:617-695-2525/zrice@stopcorporateabuse.org +++

## The better-living-through-chemistry war: conscientious objectors needed

**Why worry?** A war against weeds and insects can also destroy other living things:

**“American homeowners used an estimated 163 million pounds of pesticides in 2001, the most recent statistic available. That’s overkill, literally. Lawn pesticides decimate as many as 7 million birds annually in the US. Human exposures result in health problems that include higher rates of cancer among children whose parents work with pesticides.”**  
**Mark Miller MD, MPH, director of the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit at University of California, San Francisco, “Non-Toxic Pest Control,” Vincent Standley and P.W. McRandle *The Green Guide*, June/July 2005.**

Whoever it was who said, “Summertime and the living is easy,” probably wasn’t having to contend with all the potential toxicity of the twenty-first century.

Just when we give up digging dandelions, it’s mosquito season in Minnesota. No self-respecting summer picnic would be complete without ants. And what shall we do about crab grass? To tan or not to tan, that’s an excellent question. All of these issues have to be faced by someone who wants to avoid all possible toxic chemicals.

What’s the big deal about pesticides? Organophosphates and pyrethroids work by interfering with the nervous system. Exposure to these chemicals can cause headaches, vision disturbances, memory and concentration difficulties, fatigue, and depression. Some varieties of pyrethroids can also trigger asthmatic reactions. The July/August 2005 [#109] and the May/June 2006 editions [#114] of *The Green Guide* cover most of these summer nuisances, so let’s look at them one at a time.

**Insects.** Vincent Standley and P.W. McRandle in #109 say that effective indoor pest management is as much prevention as extermination. If we can deprive pests of food, water, and entry, we can win. Boric acids baits must be kept away from children and pets, but work both for ants and cockroaches. Soapy water or citrus oil and water kill ants. Sugar and boric acid baits will eliminate nests. Winning against cockroaches requires maintaining a clean kitchen and fixing leaks. Chemicals released by roaches attract other roaches, so pheromone sticky traps will be needed.

Place boric acid baits along walls and near food-prep areas, and seal all cracks.

**Lawns.** In “Detoxing Green Velvet” [#114], Amanda MacMillan writes: “Manicured green grass may or may not be the American dream, but if you don’t want your yard to pose a threat to the environment and your health, you may want to join the organic trend. The market for organic lawn and garden care is upward of \$500 million a year and growing: About 5 million US households use non-synthetic fertilizers, insect and pest control, and that number is expected to double over the next five years.”

Instead of synthetic pesticides, herbicides, and insecticides, repel bugs and weeds with homemade mixtures such as hot peppers and water [thegreenguide.com/reports] or use beneficial insects that prey on pests [thebeneficialinsectco.com]. Be liberal with grass seed on bare spots because if enough grass springs up, weeds can’t grow there. More tips can be found at [organiclandcare.net](http://organiclandcare.net). Grow your lawn at least three inches tall for a deeper, stronger root system; weeds that sprout will be blocked from the sun.

**Summer sun—glorious and dangerous.** “It’s hard to resist the allure of the summer sun,” says Emily Main, in “Summer Skin Protectors.” But 90% of all skin cancers are caused by sun exposure. “Further complicating the issue, products designed to protect us from excessive ultraviolet radiation may also cause harm in the long run. Commonly used sunscreen chemicals, such as benzophenone and octylmethoxycinnamate, parabens used as

preservatives, and phthalates found in synthetic fragrances are suspected hormonal system disrupters.”

Emily Main recommends California Baby’s No Fragrance SPF 30+ Sunscreen. It uses titanium oxide, which like zinc oxide, physically blocks radiation and is less likely than other sunscreens to penetrate skin [californiababy.com]. In spite of the name, do not use this or any other sunscreen on babies younger than six months. Protect them with proper clothing and limit their exposure during peak hours. For more choices, see *Green Guide’s* sunscreen report at [thegreenguide.com/reports](http://thegreenguide.com/reports) and remember that no sunscreen is going to stop all rays from penetrating your skin, so limiting your time in the sun is the safest way to reduce risk of skin cancer.

I was surprised to learn that a 2003 study in *Mutation Research* suggests that highly concentrated DHA, an FDA-approved ingredient in self-tanners that reacts with the sugars in dead skin cells to dye your skin may actually delay skin cancer. The chemically-induced pigmentation absorbs a small amount of UV rays. But don’t rely on a self-tanner to provide SPF protection. The author liked Lavera’s Sunless Self-tanning Lotion [lavera-usa.com] and Circuit Soleil [circuitskin.com].

Cover up. A wide-brimmed hat is a must for long days in the sun. Coolibar makes sun-protective clothing blocking 98% of all UV rays. You can buy SunGuard SPF clothing protector to add to your laundry that increases UPF from 5 to 30. Its active ingredient cannot be absorbed by the skin: 866-871-3157. +++

Whether you grill [76% of us grill] on your deck, or head for a park, here are issues you might want to consider.

**CHOOSE ORGANIC OR GRASSFED.** Burger lovers can, occasionally\*, enjoy certified organic beef, which guarantees that cows eat vegetarian, avoiding the cannibalism that spreads bovine spongiform encephalopathy [BSE] or mad cow disease. We no longer grill, but if we did, organic, locally-grown is what we would choose.

We went to hear Eric Schlosser speak at Carleton College on May 12. We also played the Morgan Spurlock/ Eric Schlosser interview at the end of the *SuperSize Me* DVD at our May lesson. During the interview Schlosser says that he does not allow his children to eat hamburger, though he occasionally eats organic ground beef himself. Asked why, he says that children are more at risk for E.coli and other diseases than adults—Notable Quotables, p 4. Also, he corrected a statement in his book, *Fast Food Nation*. He had written that a pound of hamburger is made from hundreds of cows. Someone from the Centers for Disease Control called to say he was wrong; the chunks of meat in a hamburger actually comes from thousands of cows from all over the world.

In "Burger and Bun," *The Green Guide* #109, David Wortman says that Consumers Union had recently criticized the USDA for screening for BSE less than 1% of the 35 million cows slaughtered in the US every year. By choosing meat that is certified organic, you also are spared antibiotics and growth hormones. Grass fed is even better, since it is leaner. Bison burgers are super lowfat. Bison is available nearby, and some of our class members like it. I have used bison in slow cooker stews, but haven't tried the ground version. I have previously written about irradiated beef and wondered if irradiation's untested technology is being used to shift focus away from the need to change unclean practices in the raising/processing of animals for food. I am thankful we can buy the little bit of meat we eat from farmers we can talk to at our farmers market. Even our favorite place to eat out, the King's Room at St Olaf College, uses locally-grown organic meat and produce. This is the policy of Bon Appétit, a California catering company serving 150 restaurants, corporations, and colleges in 26 states.

**\*BLACKENED ISN'T BETTER.** The National Cancer Institute says well-done, charred barbecued meats can increase by 50% the risk for colon, pancreatic, or breast cancers. Wortman says, "Turn meat frequently, keeping it away from flames to avoid carcinogenic, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons [PAHs] and heterocyclic amines [HCAs] formed by charring burgers and other meats."

**DESTROY BACTERIA.** Salmonella, E.coli, and Campylobacter are just a few of the bacteria that can be found in red meat, poultry, and fish, while Listeria found in hotdogs has been linked to miscarriages. Childhood cancer risk increases according to the number of times a child eats hot dogs. To avoid meat-borne pathogens, separate all animal products from other foods and from one another.

Use a meat thermometer, as pathogens can survive in browned meat. Cook pork/ground meat to 160° F; steaks and chops to 145° F; poultry thighs and breasts to 170° F; whole birds to 180° F. Main problems with fish are mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls [PCBs]. The healthiest choice is wild Alaskan salmon\*\*, since it is less likely than swordfish and tuna to carry mercury, which causes nervous system damage, and avoids the PCBs of some farmed and lake fish. \*\*Watch for this topic in fall 2006 *ink spots*.

**WATCH YOUR SIDES.** Veggie shish kebabs are a healthy grilling choice. The World Health Organization has begun warning us about acrylamides found in baked, roasted, fried, and grilled foods. Potato chips and french fries have the highest levels. By the way, if you watch "the smoking fry" segment at the end of *SuperSize Me*, our classes predict you will never eat McDonald's french fries again. Wortman recommends a whole grain bun and an antioxidant-rich salad made from produce in season.

**YOUR DECK.** If you are building a deck, ask me for a copy of "Green Hands on Deck" from March/April 2006 *Real Money*. Decks need to be constructed of materials that can withstand weather and insects, but your choice of materials matters. There are good and bad kinds of "plastic lumber." composite materials, as well as natural wood. What you don't want is pressure-treated wood. In 2001 the Environmental Working Group wrote "Poisoned Playgrounds," describing wood treated with chromium copper arsenate—plainly, arsenic. A child playing daily on CCA-treated wood could be exposed to five times the arsenic allowed under EPA drinking water standards.

**PLASTICS.** There's disagreement about how many times you can reuse a water bottle, but here are some guidelines. Check the recycling codes on the bottoms of your containers. **WORST.** #3 releases carcinogenic dioxins into the environment and can leach hormone disrupting phthalate plasticizers; #6 PS (polystyrene), used in coffee cups and take-out containers, can leach styrene, a possible human carcinogen. **BETTER.** #1 PET or PETE containers are recyclable and safe for single use. With repeated use, PET containers may release di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate, an endocrine-disrupting compound and probable human carcinogen. Recently some PET bottled water containers were also found to leach antimony. Study author Bill Shotyk noted that concentrations of antimony in bottled water increase over time. #7 includes polycarbonate, Nalgene Lexan, sports bottles, baby bottles, and food containers, contain hormone-disrupting bisphenol A, which may stray into contents when stressed by heat or age. Hand washing is recommended.

**BEST.** None of the following has been shown to leach carcinogens or endocrine-disrupters: #2 HDPE is durable and recyclable; #4 LDPE is used in some food wraps and plastic bags. #5 PP is popular in reusable containers. A stainless steel thermos is always safe if it does not have a plastic liner. Recommended wraps: Ziploc sandwich bags, Saran Cling Plus, and Glad Cling Wrap. +++

# Let's Be Well, Inc

...serving health seekers since 1992. How may we serve you?

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## Notable Quotables

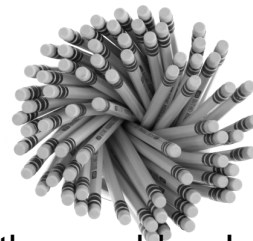
- **Sticker shock?** Next time you fill your tank, be thankful it's not water. At 9 oz for \$1.49, Evian cost \$21.19 per gallon. E-mail.
- **ADHD/Asperger's/Autism?** "Given that we know that the developing fetus and children are far more vulnerable to environmental contaminants than adults, we need to do everything possible to reduce toxic exposures."...Environmental toxins can contribute to developmental and behavioral disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and mental retardation. The question of possible links to Asperger's Syndrome and autism has also been raised. Unfortunately, "we can't suggest that one type of chemical is going to cause autism and another is going to cause something else," says Elise Miller, MEd, executive director of the Institute for Children's Environmental Health....Although the role that contaminants play in autism is unclear, they remain the focus of a new University of California Davis study of 2,000 children. "Learning Hazards," July/August 2005 *The Green Guide* #109.
- **Organic or conventionally-grown?** "A review of 41 studies comparing the nutrient levels of organic versus conventionally-grown fruits, vegetables, and cereals found more iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and vitamin C in organic produce. Organic spinach, lettuce, cabbage, and potatoes showed particularly high levels of minerals." Studies have also found significantly higher levels of antioxidant phytonutrients in organic produce. "Does Organic Offer a Nutrition Edge over Conventional Crops?" *Environmental Nutrition*, April 2005.
- **Serving size sprawl.** "Restaurants have found that it pays to serve larger portions....Witness the popularity of all-you-can-eat buffets. 'People feel cheated if they only get a reasonable amount of food,' says Marian Nestle, chair of the department of nutrition at New York University. 'And there's no end in sight.'" Fries come in ever-bigger containers, and the original 270-calorie hamburgers that launched McDonald's, now appear in kids' Happy Meals. All told, McDonald's original burger, fries, and 12-oz Coke delivered 590 calories. One of today's SuperSize meals with a Quarter Pounder with cheese, SuperSize fries, and a SuperSize Coke delivers 1,550. "Diet and Health MegaTrends," *Nutrition Action Health Letter*, January/February 2001.
- **Burning off a Big Mac Meal.** Nutritionists in Great Britain have computed just how far you would have to walk to be rid of the 1,411 calories from a Big Mac lunch: 9.5 miles. London's *Sun* newspaper reports that even McDonald's salads require a 2.5 mile walk to ward off the calories, thanks to the fatty salad dressings that have more calories than their smaller burgers. *The Sun* compiled a list of other fast food favorites: meat pizza: 930 calories = a 6.2 mile walk, KFC meal = a 6.06 mile walk. If you eat at McDonald's, KFC, or Burger King regularly, you are more likely to become obese—unless you do that 10-mile walk after each meal. Explanation: Fast food not only contains many more calories, but also is more likely to undermine normal appetite control systems. *CompuServe*, October 26, 2005.
- **Beware of french fries.** Researchers at Harvard Med School found that females who ate french fries in their preschool years had an increased risk of breast cancer as adults. For every serving of fries, the risk rose 27%. While the potatoes themselves are not dangerous, deep-frying them in saturated fats and transfatty acids apparently makes them potentially lethal. *The Week*, September 16, 2005.
- **A bug that kills children.** In about 4% of E.coli O157:H7 cases, a powerful toxin called the Shiga toxin enters the bloodstream, causing hemolytic kidney failure, anemia, internal bleeding, and the destruction of vital organs. Shiga toxins can cause seizures, neurological damage, and strokes. About 5% of the children who develop it are killed by it. Those who survive are often left with permanent disabilities, such as blindness or brain damage. Children under five, the elderly, and those with impaired immune systems are most likely to suffer from illnesses caused by E.coli O157:H7. The pathogen is now the leading cause of kidney failure in the US. Alex Donley, age 6, ate a tainted hamburger in July, 1993. His illness began with abdominal cramps as severe as labor pains. It progressed to diarrhea that filled a hospital toilet with blood. While doctors were drilling holes in his skull to relieve pressure and inserting tubes in his chest to keep him breathing, the Shiga toxins destroyed his internal organs. His mother watched helplessly as he called out for her, terrified and in pain. He had become ill on a Tuesday night. By Sunday afternoon he was dead. "Portions of his brain had liquefied," wrote Eric Schlosser, who will not let his children eat hamburgers. Schlosser tells this horror story, among several others, in his chapter, "What's in the meat?" *Fast Food Nation*. **Everyone who eats fast food needs to read it.** Schlosser is a correspondent for *The Atlantic Monthly*. This was his first book. It reminds me of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, an exposé of the meat packing industry that I read as a college student in the 50s. Written in 1906, it is still influencing journalists like Schlosser and Gail A. Eisnitz, who wrote *Slaughter House* in 1997.
- **FAKE FRIES.** 2 medium baking potatoes, scrubbed/ 1 tablespoon olive oil/ dash of sea salt, preferably Celtic or RealSalt  
Preheat oven to 345° F. Cut potatoes into 1/4" julienne strips. Pat dry with paper towels. Place potatoes on a baking sheet, add olive oil, and toss to coat. Bake until golden. High-fat foods should be eaten in moderation anyway, but acrylamide formation gives you one more reason to "hold the fries." Adapted from *The Green Guide*, #112. +++

## Hold the fries: skip the acrylamide

My mother used to tell me that burnt toast would help me to sing well. It's a good thing I didn't believe her. Acrylamide, a chemical produced during the baking, frying, or grilling of nearly all carbohydrate-rich foods is known to cause nervous tremors in humans, and has also been linked to birth defects, male infertility, and cancer in laboratory animals. The FDA says it is in 40% of the American diet.

Concern about acrylamide is fairly recent, dating from the late 90s, when cattle became paralyzed and fish started dying near a construction site in Sweden. Health officials traced the cause to acrylamide in grout used in the tunnel. Blood tests of workers showed that they also had been exposed.

"Cigarettes emit the noxious stuff," but many of the volunteers for a subsequent Swedish study were non-smokers. Researchers found that it forms during the final stages of baking or frying of everyday foods: french fries, cookies, muffins, bread, and even roasted coffee. Foods low in sugars—poultry, meats, dairy products, and unsweetened chocolate—form very little acrylamide, especially when cooked under 212° F, far below baking/frying temps. Catherine Zandonella, MPH, *The Green Guide*, January/February 2006. +++



## LET'S TALK ABOUT PARABLES

The Bible is full of stories, including the parables Jesus told. But there are other tales that teach principles that help us make sense of our lives. I have permission of *Signs of the Times*® and graphic artist, Merwin Stewart, to share the following parable:

*The pencil maker took the pencil aside, just before putting it into the box. "There are five things you need to know before I send you out into the world," he said. "Always remember these five things, and you will be a great pencil.*

*"One: You are capable of many great things but only if you allow yourself to be held in someone's hand.*

*"Two: You will experience a painful sharpening from time to time, but you will need it to become a better pencil.*

*"Three: You have the ability to correct the mistakes you make.*

*"Four: The most important part of you will always be what's inside.*

*"And five: On every surface where you are used, regardless of its condition, you must leave your mark."*

*The pencil understood and promised to remember.*

• author unknown

In their "Executive Message" in the May-June *Partners Living Well*, AIM co-owners, Dennis Itami and Ron Wright, wrote: "Think about the old yellow pencil. Pretty simple device. Lead on one end. Eraser on the other. Wood surrounding the lead. Painted yellow. As basic as it is, it is nonetheless the product of a lot of thought, work, craftsmanship, technology, you name it. People working together with the understanding that what was being accomplished would result in something...."

The article goes on to describe the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC), a group formed to advise the AIM owners and management on their direction of the company. Dick and I know Jim and Carolyn Kling, Janet Pauly, Ralph Peterson, Loren Schiele, Edna and Hilton Smith, and Sandy Combs well. Dedicated and hard-working as they are separately, only good could come from their working together as a circle of influence.

The PAC team met in Nampa in March to tackle improving the compensation plan in order to get money into the hands of newer members sooner. An analysis of AIM's Ladder of Opportunity® showed that it was one of the top-paying plans when compared with other network marketing businesses, but there was a gap in the beginning of the process.

At the San Antonio convention, we were introduced to the end result of their hard work. Please take time to read carefully pages 2, 7, and 8 of the

July-August Partners Living Well. You will be introduced to \$mart \$tart™, the product of the PAC team's determination to find a simple way to reward members even before they have made promotions—actually, to pay a 20% bonus to *anyone* who introduces the AIM products to someone and helps him or her to place that first AIM order. Pages 6-7 explain “Getting off to a \$mart \$tart” in detail. The overview on page 7 uses bullets to simplify the plan so that anyone can understand it, even a new member. The rewards of sharing AIM with others are better than ever!

Like the yellow pencil, each AIM member has an opportunity to leave a mark. AIM sends out thousands of checks each month to recognize the efforts of those who have introduced people to AIM. For AIM's leaders, like those on the PAC team, the checks may seem like surplus, yet they represent the harvest of many years of faithfully tending their AIM businesses. For those relatively new to AIM, smaller checks can represent hope--hope for a time when they can use them for more than merely easing the burden of making car payments, or purchasing new shoes for their growing children.

We like introducing AIM products to people because we believe that they provide “nutrition that works.” But we sometimes forget to mention that if you set goals, you never quit, and you are determined to bless a lot of people, you can also reap financial rewards, substantial ones, with which you can bless even more people.

Dennis and Ron put it this way, “Like that yellow pencil, AIM is a success not because of a single person, but because of thousands and thousands of people, including the PAC, Elites, and all our other AIM members.”

Remember the parable of the pencil, and extrapolate it to tens of thousands of AIM “pencils,” allowing themselves to be held in Someone's hand, enduring painful sharpening from time to time, but as a result, becoming better able to serve the One who sent them into the world to serve others. May it be so. +++

**Promotions:** We are pleased to recognize the following who have made promotions with AIM: to *Preferred Member*: **Yolanda Heath**, Paducah KY; Irene Noterman, Faribault. MN; **Lynette/Gary Polzin**, Northfield MN; to *Group Builder*: **Ann/Bob Knutson**, Northfield MN.

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