



# The Green Party of Virginia



## ABOUT US

[Current Campaigns](#)  
[Platform](#)  
[Press Releases](#)  
[Contacts / Links](#)  
[E-mail Listservs](#)  
[Meeting Minutes](#)  
[Electoral Archives](#)  
[Newsletters](#)  
[Bylaws](#)  
[Consensus Process](#)  
[Become a Member](#)  
[Donate](#)  
[News Archive](#)

## COMMITTEES

[Interim](#)  
[Activism](#)  
[Candidate Exploration](#)  
[Local Organizing](#)  
[Finance](#)  
[Information Technology](#)  
[Platform](#)  
[Structural Reform](#)  
[Steering](#)

## GREEN LOCALS

[Arlington](#)  
[Blue Ridge](#)  
[Central Virginia](#)  
[Fredericksburg](#)  
[Loudoun](#)  
[New River Valley](#)  
[Northern Virginia](#)  
[Richmond](#)  
[Rockbridge](#)  
[Virginia Beach](#)

## THE TEN KEY VALUES

[Ecological Wisdom](#)  
[Social Justice](#)  
[Grassroots Democracy](#)  
[Nonviolence](#)  
[Decentralization](#)  
[Community Based](#)  
[Economics](#)  
[Feminism](#)  
[Respect for Diversity](#)  
[Personal & Global Responsibility](#)  
[Future Focus & Sustainability](#)

Number 25

The Green Party of Virginia Newsletter

Winter 1999

## Table of Contents

<a href="#">...and the work goes on</a>	Sandra Stuart
<a href="#">Enter the Greens</a>	Dean Myerson
<a href="#">State News</a>	Staff
<a href="#">National News</a>	Staff
<a href="#">International News</a>	Staff
<a href="#">Virginia Tech Toughens Standards on Apparel Companies</a>	David Ferguson
<a href="#">DEA Sabotaging Legal Hemp Industry</a>	David Frankel
<a href="#">Learning From Seattle</a>	Darien De Lu
<a href="#">OPINION: A Quantum Leap to Party Status: Virginia Greens Must Intensify Effort for the Year 2000</a>	Roger Clarke
<a href="#">Fur-Free Friday in Roanoke</a>	Joseph Auth
<a href="#">Welcome and Thank You</a>	Staff
<a href="#">Greens of Virginia Newsletter</a>	Staff

---

[Newsletters](#)


---

[GPVA](#)


---

## ...And The Work Goes On

by Sandra Stuart

Outside an overcast day, two men in serious conversation. Inside, a woman vigorously scrubbing a bathtub. Two young girls flit in and out of the two scenes. It's business as usual for the Sheffield family, though it is also a day when their lives shift focus.

The day before, Eric Sheffield had lost his bid for supervisor in Rockbridge County. The supervisor-elect has come to call and ask if Eric would be willing to help him out. Having specific ideas in mind, Sheffield welcomes the offer. As for his wife Elise, well, Eric's defeat means that she lost their bet on who would clean the tub.

Using the Rockbridge Greens Platform -- a 97-plank document expanded from the 10 Key Values -- Sheffield had run a non-partisan campaign. Among others, a number of people who helped in the development of the platform had encouraged him not to run a partisan campaign, because of the public's deep distrust of all political parties and/or a perception of the Green Party as extreme.

Nonetheless, Eric saw the platform as "a tool that anyone can use who wants to run for the Board of Supervisors" and, since he was aware that "growth and development" were the factors affecting many areas of the document, this became the theme of his campaign.

Two months into the campaign, the incumbent dropped out of the race and picked a returned native and retiree to run for his seat. The incumbent had supported uncontrolled development, yet the hand-picked candidate appeared to like Sheffield's platform, often adopting the language of the Greens' platform to express his views.

By devoting every Saturday to visiting the 1900 registered voters in the South River district, Sheffield managed to talk to, or leave his campaign literature with nearly every one of them. The Rockbridge Advocate, one of the local papers, praised his efforts by writing, "of the two candidates, [Sheffield] seems to be more willing to listen to people and roll up his sleeves and work."

A fund-raiser, organized by volunteers for Sheffield, brought in \$4,374 from 95 people, each of whom contributed less than \$100. In-kind contributions totalled \$335. Sheffield's campaign spent almost all the funds on advertising, signs, brochures, and a direct mailing. His opponent raised \$1,562 from 12 contributors, which included \$600 from the incumbent and \$250 from the Sixth District Republican Party.

Following a forum at Maury River Middle School, in which both candidates spoke to the student body, Sheffield won a mock election with 54% of the vote. On the day of the election, however, Sheffield received 40% of the vote, the final count being 404 to 608. In his characteristic, droll fashion, Sheffield noted "it cost about \$10 for each vote I received."

One of the most heartening aspects for Sheffield was his strong volunteer support. In addition to the successful fund-raiser (he had hoped for \$2,500), nine people wrote letters to the editor of the local weekly papers, seven people worked the polls, and twenty people helped put up 200 signs in three hours. He also received the endorsement of the monthly Rockbridge Advocate, which shares his concern for what developers are doing to change the basic character of the county. The editor noted that Sheffield "does know that the right decision is not necessarily the most immediately popular decision."

Perhaps Sheffield's strong showing brought about his opponent's visit. Perhaps in the process of campaigning, some of the Green ideas made an impression. More specifically, perhaps he has begun to realize the importance of planning growth and development in this rural county. In any case, Sheffield encouraged the supervisor-elect to oppose a proposed \$2.3 million-plus sewage treatment plant in the northwest area of the county. The board appears ready to double the capacity of the existing system even though people in the area have not indicated they want it. In fact, the matter was never brought before the Planning Commission and there is no plan in place to handle such development.

Sheffield has suggested the board's urgency to build the plant could have "something to do with bailing out a developer who is under pressure to upgrade his substandard facilities. Agreeing to build," Sheffield continues, "would set a precedent for letting developers dictate how the county should spend its tax dollars" -- tax dollars from "all county taxpayers, not just the users and developers who will benefit from it." Sheffield later commended the new South River supervisor in a letter to the editor of a weekly paper, for appealing to the board to delay its decision until the proper planning and review could be made.

In another area concerning Greens' interests, the board of supervisors recently hired a consultant, for \$3,000, to assess the feasibility of setting up a program for the purchase of development rights. During the campaign, Sheffield and his opponent had disagreed on conservation easement. His opponent stated that he supported the current volunteer effort that was being made. So far, this approach has attracted only a few wealthy, large landowners and does not encourage or inform the more modest landholders needed to control development more effectively. Sheffield addressed this piecemeal approach by stressing one of the elements of the Rockbridge Greens Platform - the need to set up a program to preserve farmland and open space.

Sheffield's initiative and vision at work was also obvious when the local landmark, Hull's Drive-in Theater, closed in the middle of the campaign. Along with many others, he and Elise and their daughters had enjoyed the drive-in for many years. Though he did not want to take time from his campaign, his personal commitment to the community and local business led him to talk with those involved with the closing. After gathering pertinent information, he wrote a letter to the editor of the local weekly papers calling for support. He followed that up by helping organize a committee to save the drive-in. There are now 500 volunteer Hull's Angels and an active board. There is still much to do to save the drive-in, but the possibility is much stronger than many would have thought.

Clearly, Rockbridge County is the winner in having Eric Sheffield working in its interests.

---

[Newsletters](#)


---

[GPVA](#)


---

## Enter The Greens

by Dean Myerson

Greens and fellow progressives from all over the United States have been watching the presidential process unfold, and have been appalled at the "money primary," in which the wealthiest Americans get to decide who will be on the ballot next year.

Centrist candidates demand that we vote for them because they are not quite as bad as another candidate, thus driving many voters away from the polls -- voters who want something to vote for.

At the same time, many progressive organizations and political parties have already declared that they will not participate in the presidential process,

either because they are not ready, or because they also choose to support the lesser of multiple evils.

Enter the Green Party. As a political party committed to independent politics -- independent of either of the major parties -- we want to offer voters an alternative. An alternative that is opposed to NAFTA and the WTO without scapegoating foreign workers, or immigrants in the U.S. An alternative that combines social justice, environmental and economic fairness issues into a single platform.

In short, an alternative that is willing to stand independent of our corrupt political process and not be "guilt-tripped" into supporting candidates we don't like.

In July, the Association of State Green Parties chose Denver, Colorado, as the site of its National Nominating Convention next year, scheduled for the weekend of June 24, accepting the offer of the Green Party of Colorado to host the event. This will be a convention of Greens from all over the United States to vote for their presidential and vice presidential candidates, and to adopt a platform for the campaign. All Green organizations, irrespective of who they are (or aren't) affiliated with will be invited to send delegates, as long as they are a politically active group.

There currently are two declared candidates for the nomination: Stephen Gaskin of Tennessee and Joel Kovel, a Green from New York. And Ralph Nader is seriously considering seeking the nomination again. Nader has given the Green Party of California permission to put his name on their primary ballot and has described his strategy for a serious, aggressive campaign. Nader has committed to making a public decision by February 2000.

This convention -- held during the lull between the bunched up primaries in March and the major-party conventions in the late summer -- will be the kickoff point for what may be the most significant national progressive campaign in many years. Greens from around the United States, and from around the world, will be gathering in Denver to build solidarity to take home to their campaigns in all the states. Confirmed keynote speakers so far are Jim Hightower and Manning Marable, Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University.

Whether you hope to be a Green Party delegate, or just want to be a part of this solidarity, you want to be in Denver for this convention. Nomination proceedings on Sunday, June 25, will be open to the public. If you want to come for the entire convention, the prices including food are \$245 for single occupancy or \$165 for double occupancy. This covers two nights (Friday and Saturday), plus catered meals. There will also be an ASGP meeting on Friday, June 23.

Please make checks payable to "ASGP" and send to the address below. We do not accept credit cards.

ASGP  
PMB 329  
637B S. Broadway  
Boulder, CO 80303

If you have any questions, you can e-mail us at [asgp-convention@greens.org](mailto:asgp-convention@greens.org).

If your Green group is interested in sending delegates to the convention but is not affiliated with the ASGP, please contact our Credentials Committee Chair, Greg Gerritt, at [gerritt@edgenet.net](mailto:gerritt@edgenet.net), to indicate your interest in participating.

Let's make this convention a springboard for a new progressive politics in the United States!

---

[Newsletters](#)

[GPVA](#)

---

## State News

by Staff

### *Phil Welch Elected Vice Chairman of Natural Bridge Soil and Water Conservation District Board.*

Congratulations to Rockbridge Green, Phil Welch, who recently was elected vice chairman of the Natural Bridge Soil and Water Conservation District Board. Welch made history in 1997 when he became one of the first Greens in Virginia to be elected to office.

### *Green Party of Virginia to Hold State Meeting on February 5*

The GOV will hold its quarterly state meeting in Charlottesville on Saturday, Feb. 5, from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Central Branch Library on Market Street. After breaking for lunch, we will host a guest panel of speakers who will discuss various areas of activism. Roger Clarke will speak on the Affirmative Action Campaign at UVa, Sherri Smith will talk about the Montebello Clean Mountain Coalition, Christina Wulf will speak about the Shenandoah Eco Defense Group, and Alexis Zeigler will discuss the Buy Local Campaign.

The public is most welcome to attend.

### *Presidential Petition Drive for Virginia Begins to Take Shape*

At the last GOV state meeting, a committee to work on the Green Presidential (with Nader most likely running) campaign was formed. The gathering and submitting of forms to be an elector has already started. There were problems with this process during the last presidential cycle. The Green Party will work with the state and local district registrars to achieve completion on this. After this is done a gathering of volunteers to organize petition drives will begin.

Help is needed and many ideas have been shared already, such as: web site, or link, musicians and events, getting a treasurer to collect money, or working with an existing national group.

If you live in district 1 or 10, you can get signatures in five other districts. If you live in district 7, you can collect signatures in six of the eleven districts in Virginia. Contact Sharon Williams at (703) 404-8943 [greenwoman@usa.net](mailto:greenwoman@usa.net) or Jim Lowenstern at (703) 820-0168 [zuboguy@aol.com](mailto:zuboguy@aol.com).

---

[Newsletters](#)

[GPVA](#)

---

## National News

by Staff

### *Draft Nader Committee Presents Him With Hundreds of Petitions*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Draft Committee representatives Carol Miller and Ronnie Dugger met with Ralph Nader at a bookstore cafe near Dupont Circle, on Wednesday, Jan. 19, where they presented Mr. Nader a copy of the Draft Committee Proclamation, signed by hundred of persons around the country. Other supporters joined the group at the cafe.

Mr. Nader quietly read the proclamation and then the Draft Committee discussed with him the growing support for his candidacy and potential campaign appearances in California and New Mexico. Mr. Nader said that he intends to communicate with the Iowa Green Party prior to the Iowa caucuses. Iowa Greens hope that the communication will include additional information about his campaign plans.

At the meeting, the Draft Committee Board formally terminated its existence, and the principals are considering the formation of a grassroots political committee to support Nader's candidacy.

### *Delaware Greens Hope to Gain Ballot*

WILMINGTON, Del. -- Delaware will have another political party on its ballot next year if the Green Party can attract enough supporters.

Delaware Green Party organizer Winston Grizzard, of Wilmington, said he needs to sign up at least 240 people to get it on the state's ballot.

To date, he said, he has registered about 100 people as Green Party members.

Minor parties that have achieved Delaware ballot status in recent years include the Libertarians, the Natural Law Party, the U.S. Taxpayers' Party and the Reform Party.

The Delaware Green Party organization held its first meeting in November, with about 20 people in attendance.

### *Connecticut Green Party Wins Seat on Hartford City Council*

HARTFORD, Conn. -- In an election in which voter turnout was down and the number of candidates on the ballot was up, Elizabeth Horton Sheff beat the odds Tuesday [November 2, 1999] in her Hartford city council victory.

The number of voters who turned up in the wind and rain to vote Tuesday was down 13 percent from the municipal election two years ago. But Horton Sheff, a former councilwoman and mayoral candidate making her second consecutive council bid as a member of the Green Party, increased her total by 18 percent over her unsuccessful 1997 effort.

Horton Sheff's strength was clear city-wide. She increased her vote in 20 of the city's 27 voting districts, posting huge gains in districts in the liberal-

leaning West End as well as the North End, which is home to a large African American constituency.

### ***Plans Take Shape for a National Green Party in 2000***

The long-held dream for a single national Green Party organization is beginning to take shape into reality. The basic terms of the plan for the establishment of the national Green Party structure call for dissolving both the ASGP and G/GPUSA. A new, national Green Party organization will take their places, incorporating the ASGP's current by-laws as a starting point.

There would be two votes per state on the interim national committee -- the interim national committee would govern the new national party until proportional representation between the states is passed. There will be a process to come up with proposals for proportionality between the states in 2001.

Once a proposal comes forward, there will be a lengthy ratification process, to ensure full participation so that the process behind the ultimate FEC application is deeply rooted. It is also a political gesture towards those who are concerned that state-based structures are not sufficiently inclusive.

New elections for the steering committee of new national party would be held in Denver on the Friday before the convention. Five members will be elected, including a treasurer, secretary and three co-chairs. The co-chairs will be elected by choice voting.

### ***Green Presidential Candidate Calls for Abolition of the World Trade Organization***

Dr. Joel Kovel, who is seeking the Green Party nomination for President, recently called for the abolition of the World Trade Organization.

"Globalization and the constant liberalization of trade now pose a threat to global ecologies and the future of civilization itself. The capacity of WTO to override the laws of nation-states, as well as key treaties between states such as agreements on human rights and biodiversity, or the Kyoto protocols on global warming, undermines democracy. Workers' rights, environmental and consumer protections, health and safety issues, are all subjugated to the interests of corporations and their worldwide pursuit of profits," stated Dr. Kovel.

Kovel went on to say "We have not seen a concerted movement of resistance on this scale since the Vietnam War. We need to abolish the present WTO and replace it with a "World Peoples Trade Organization" (WPTO), in which trade decisions are made through a democratically chosen body representative of the world citizenry and the actual producers of wealth, instead of those whose agenda is defined by profiteering."

Kovel said that any new trade agreement needs to include "a calculation of ecological costs, so as to impose tariffs on those goods and services in proportion to the degree that they destabilize human and natural ecologies. These tariffs, which have to be administered transnationally, will also become a means of redistributing wealth and fostering ecologically constructive ways of production."

Kovel also proposes that a kind of "shadow WPTO" emerge from the Seattle counter-demonstrations against the WTO. This would serve as a kind of tribunal over the existing WTO, and would organize and coordinate the intermediate campaigns for reform.

---

[Newsletters](#)

[GPVA](#)

---

## **International News**

**by Staff**

### ***Tempers Flare at Mexican Green Party Meeting***

MEXICO CITY, Mexico -- Members of Mexico's Environmental Green Party engaged in a massive shoving and fist-fighting match at a Nov. 22 meeting in Mexico City.

The confrontation at a Sunday conference came as major opposition parties began courting the Greens ahead of the 2000 presidential elections. The party is expected to win only around 4 or 5 percent of votes, as it has in the past, but could be important in a tight race.

Green activists angered by the long domination of the party by founder Jorge Gonzalez Torres, who serves as the group's chairman and presidential candidate and whose son heads the party's congressional delegation, got into a fight with Gonzalez' supporters.

Party spokeswoman Beatriz Carrasco said those attending the Sunday meeting were not technically members of the party and that the party had already voted to make Gonzalez Torres its presidential candidate for a second time at a June convention.

### ***New Zealand Greens Win Six Seats In Parliament***

AUKLAND, N.Z. New Zealand Greens Co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimons won Coromandel on the count of special votes, by 246 votes, overturning an election night deficit of 114 votes. With about 4.88% of the party votes, the Greens will now have 6 MPs, including Co-leader Rod Donald.

Labour will end nine years in opposition, but it will need the Alliance and the Green Party to form a government, according to two opinion polls.

The Greens had broke through the 5 per cent threshold for parliamentary representation, up four points to 6 per cent. Labour and the Alliance had 59 seats between them, and would be short of a majority in the 120-seat Parliament. They would need the Green MPs to govern.

### ***German Green Party Works to Reinvent Itself As A Party of Power***

BERLIN, Germany: Germany's Green party is seeking to reinvent itself as a party of power. If it succeeds, it could transform the German political scene, replacing the liberal Free Democrats as the natural coalition partner in any government.

Environmental policies will be central to any future German government agenda. If it fails, it will be another in the wider failure of green movements in many countries to become more than protest parties.

The moves follow a disastrous series of local and regional election results for the German Greens, who have been punished at the polls for their membership of the ruling red-green coalition in Berlin. The party appears to be losing some of its traditional supporters, who are far more comfortable in opposition, without winning enough new votes from the liberal-conservative centre ground occupied by the FDP.

### ***TotalFina Faces French, Italian Boycott Over Erika Oil Slick***

PARIS, France: TotalFina faced boycott calls from the Green parties in France and Italy and other groups because of the oil slick on the French coast from the accident of its tanker Erika off Brittany, activists said.

French Greens urged TotalFina shareholders to sell out and announced the installation of a "national collective for the boycott of Total." Greens spokesman, Denis Baupin, said it would be "a good deal to get rid of shares which are bound to fall as the boycott and the sanctions fall into place."

In Rome, Greens coordinator Grazia Francescato said a boycott "would be the only way to really make pay, those who are responsible for the oil slick that caused an environmental disaster on the French coast." Francescato said there is a "total absence of rules" governing the transport of crude, especially in the Mediterranean, and called on the EU to create laws similar to those in the U.S.

Responding to calls for a contribution to the cleanup effort, TotalFina chairman said on radio that he will pay one day's worth of his salary to an environmentalist organisation. He did not specify an amount.

---

[Newsletters](#)

[GPVA](#)

---

## **Virginia Tech Toughens Standards on Apparel Companies**

**by David Ferguson**

To address the concerns of abusive labor conditions in the manufacture of Virginia Tech apparel, the administration in early November told representatives of Students Against Sweatshops VT (SASVT) that they will require all companies to disclose publicly where they manufacture Virginia Tech apparel. This follows the release, earlier in the fall semester, of a Licensee Code of Conduct that establishes rights for workers and prohibits certain forms of labor abuse in the manufacture of Virginia Tech apparel.

"I am extremely proud of the University for making this commitment to ending abuse. Now it is possible for anyone to challenge the promises made by companies. Disclosure is critical to holding them to their word." Said Chris Gale who was instrumental in gathering university support for SASVT.

Virginia Tech is the first university in the Commonwealth to implement a code and call for disclosure. The move came after discussions with SASVT who were representing a resolution passed by the Student Government Association (SGA), Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), and endorsed by the Faculty Senate.

Last semester Duke University was the first to commit to full disclosure after a student sit-in in the president's office. This was followed by similar actions at other universities across the U.S. with the same result. However, the relationship at Virginia Tech has been different, with both students and administrators always trying their best to see the other's point of view.

But the situation became tense early in the semester when the administration stated in a letter to me, as SASVT president, that it would not call for full disclosure. In conversations over the summer with companies such as Nike and Champion, Virginia Tech was told if disclosure were required companies would simply stop producing clothing for Virginia Tech.

After the SGA GSA and faculty senate all voted for full disclosure, we felt it was inappropriate for the administration to value the opinions of companies over the opinion of the university community.

However, in mid October, Nike backed off its threats and posted on its webpage factory locations for five schools (UNC, Duke, Georgetown, Michigan and Wisconsin) that had already demanded disclosure. The move has opened a floodgate as companies have begun to back off and agree to disclosure.

This prompted Virginia Tech's administration to re-evaluate their position, and agree to full disclosure. Companies will be notified that full disclosure will be required during the next round of contract renewal, July 1 of this year, with companies given one year to comply.

SASVT formed in the fall of 1998 over concerns about conditions in garment factories all over the world and in the U.S. Because companies keep secret where they produce their goods it is almost impossible to link abusive conditions with specific clothing items. However, according to a Sept. 1 news release from Campaign for Labor Rights, whose director Trim Bissel recently spoke at Virginia Tech, protesting workers at Continental Park in Honduras were beaten and tear gassed by police. While no direct link could be established, Gear for Sports, which contracts in Continental Park, also produces Virginia Tech clothes in Honduras.

Hopefully we can move forward to a future where these abuses become only a horror of the past. But until then we should not forget the people who work long hours every day to produce Tech goods. Many people are so desperate they will take jobs in deplorable or abusive conditions, but that doesn't make it right to treat people that way.

SASVT and the administration are now going to evaluate how to monitor the Licensee Code of Conduct. Currently Virginia Tech is part of the Fair Labor Association, but concern about its credibility has lead SASVT to look into participating in the Workers Rights Consortium supported by Brown University. SASVT also will develop a permanent group of students and faculty to advise the administration on sweatshop issues.

For more information contact SASVT at [truth@vt.edu](mailto:truth@vt.edu).

---

[Newsletters](#)

[GPVA](#)

---

## DEA Sabotaging Legal Hemp Industry

by David Frankel

After 62 years of legal differentiation between psychoactive marijuana and non-psychoactive industrial hemp, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has suddenly begun seizing shipments of legal hemp seed products.

According to the NORML Foundation, the first seizure was a 53,000 pound loaf of sterilized hemp seed on its way to a major birdseed broker. The company whose shipment was seized, Kenex, Ltd., is Canada's largest producer of hemp food and fiber products. U.S. Customs, cooperating with the DEA, has recalled 14 other loads of hemp products that Kenex shipped to U.S. distributors in the past six months, and Jean Laprise, a farmer and president of Kenex, faces criminal penalties and \$500,000 in fines if a full recall is not achieved.

According to Don Wirtshafter, proprietor of the Ohio Hempery, Kenex is not the only company that has been affected. Wirtshafter told the Week Online, "They have held up some clothing in recent weeks. They took a shipment of hemp pillows, hemp covered pillows from Thailand. Instead of unzipping the ends of the pillows to see what's inside, they cut them all open with a knife. I'm aware of shipments from about five companies now that have been held up."

Hemp industry leaders are preparing a legal strategy to seek a declaratory judgment in their favor and compensatory damages. Relief, however, couldn't come too soon. Wirtshafter said, "I'm aware of eight major companies ready to have big booths at the Natural Products Expo this month, and the very idea of displaying the stuff now is threatened." According to Wirtshafter, "This is centered around the hemp seeds, the hemp seed oil, and the hemp nut, and all these products that we were just about to spring big time on the market. This threatens my company with bankruptcy and several others as well." While waiting for a legal resolution, Wirtshafter has to "ship back everything I've got to the DEA. It puts me out of business. I don't know how many weeks I'll be able to hold on, but it's irreparable injury."

The DEA's actions are contrary to the express rulings of every court decision . . . and 62 years of federal law. Sterilized hemp seed has never been illegal in the course of human history."

Wirtshafter told the NORML Weekly News, "The seeds coming in from Canada are extremely clean, with over 100 times less THC than anything that has entered the country from China previously. So why are they now kicking the legs out from this emerging industry? Is this because the Drug Czar said hemp would never be economical but we were just about to prove him wrong?"

The origins of the new "policy" have been difficult to trace. According to Wirtshafter, "When I asked the [customs] agent in Detroit, ♦who do I approach at the DEA to get some kind of definitive answer,' his answer was, ♦well, call Virginia, 703-555-1212, and ask for the headquarters of the DEA and start there.' He wouldn't give me any agents'names."

Wirtshafter concluded, "The 1937 Marijuana Tax Act specifically excluded the sterilized seed and the seed oil and the seed cake from the definition of marijuana, which then became incorporated in the Controlled Substances Act of 1961. What's going on here is we've done a responsible job here for 10 years separating industrial hemp from marijuana, and the DEA has refused to admit that they're two different things, that you can't get high from industrial hemp, that there's no drug issue here. Everybody agrees that the shipments were sterilized seeds, incapable of germination. So they're clearly not marijuana by definition, yet the DEA insists on treating them as marijuana, and is extending their jurisdiction over these industrial products, that Congress was very careful to exclude from their jurisdiction."

Three weeks ago, the California State Assembly passed a resolution calling on the state to consider making cultivation of industrial hemp legal and to conduct research on the production of industrial hemp. Also recently, Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura called on the federal government to cooperate with his state's efforts to explore industrial hemp.

For further information, contact David Frankel, 4th Wave Law, [dfrankel@4thwavelaw.org](mailto:dfrankel@4thwavelaw.org).

---

[Newsletters](#)

[GPVA](#)

---

## Learning from Seattle

by Darien De Lu

By now I imagine all of you have had the chance to read numerous accounts of the events in Seattle. With all that's been written, I'm reluctant to write more. Still, from my experiences in Seattle (ungassed! unarrested!) I offer my own comments and analysis plus first-hand impressions on what seems to me under-reported.

### *What New Movement?*

At this point the question is, what next? Did the WTO protest reflect a nationalistic sentiment? Or anticorporate? Or anticapitalist? Whatever the answer -- and whatever your preference -- will help to determine your next steps to build on this social phenomenon. In the U.S., our receptive audience is vast, as evident from polling results: Only among those with incomes over \$50,000 a year is there even a narrow margin in favor of the WTO proposals. And broad support exists only in those in the highest income brackets.

Vandana Shiva (a marvelous Indian economist frequently featured at anti-WTO forums) says that the most important lesson of Seattle is that now a global New Democracy Movement is being built, from the grassroots up. One of our challenges is to find the place in a global movement for inhabitants of a wealthy, corporate-run nation. Another challenge is how to organize our movement. We can learn from Seattle.

### *The Interplay of Many Activists*

In Seattle there were a number of (sometimes) overlapping "WTO tracks": the meetings of official national delegates, the work of nongovernmental organization (NGO) delegates, the NGO-sponsored public education events and demonstrations, the labor demonstrations and activity, and the civil disobedience (CD) convergence. The efforts of anti-WTO activists in each of these "tracks" resulted in a complex and remarkable interplay, leading to the triumphant "failure" of the WTO talks and the transformation of U.S. awareness of the WTO.

Although in the above list I've left out the tiny faction who attacked property (often lumped under the title of "the anarchists"), I feel obliged to acknowledge their role in generating the media (and police!) frenzy which helped draw public attention to Seattle.

I came to the WTO with a contingent from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and was primarily involved in the NGO programs and labor activities. These were outstanding. Perhaps you haven't seen the daily themes, which were realized with presentations and demonstrations:

Monday: Environment and Health Day  
 Tuesday: Labor and Human Rights Day  
 Wednesday: Women, Democracy, Sovereignty & Development Day

Thursday: Food and Agriculture Day  
Friday: Corporate Accountability Day

Unfortunately, sensationalist coverage ignored most of the "thematic" events, including most of the nonviolent and nonconfrontational demonstrations. I hope that activists will not similarly spin their wheels in who/why discussions of the property destruction.

More deserving of our attention are the other activities -- and the fact that a remarkable consensus for political nonviolence permeated the anti-WTO events. Every day, Monday thru Saturday, rain or shine, demonstrations turned out hundreds and thousands and tens of thousands of nonviolent protesters. High quality panels, presentations, videos, street theater, and music relevant to the themes (or not!) offered participants many avenues to understanding all aspects of capitalist globalization. (By the way, videos of most of these programs, in their entirety, are inexpensively available from Ralph Cole at [DemocracyU@aol.com](mailto:DemocracyU@aol.com).) Additionally, various people's assemblies and tribunals focused on the voices of the under-represented.

#### ***Debt Relief, Not WTO, Actually Benefiting the Impoverished***

Helping set a tone for the rest of the week -- although most people have heard nothing of it -- the Jubilee 2000 march/vigil brought together widely divergent groups for a contemplative action. Thousands turned out in the Monday night rain for these events, focused on helping improve the lives of people in the developing world by demanding that they be exempted from their crushing international debt burden.

The preliminary multi-denominational service/rally -- as many other events later in the week -- took place in the large and stately First United Methodist (FUM) church. Even with an overflow room offering a video feed of the program, the facility was insufficient to hold the huge numbers of demonstrators.

After the rally, we proceeded toward our planned candlelight encirclement of a site symbolic of the WTO. (The police, of course, had vetoed the original plan to surround the trade center, the WTO meeting site.) We had a hint of the unusual alliances in store for the week when we heard from the small sound stage, provided by the Teamsters, a group of Native American drummers!

#### ***Civil Disobedience and Actions Strengthened by Groups of Committed Individuals***

As the week proceeded I saw and heard many pioneers and heroes at forums and demonstrations. But the strength of our Seattle victory was not based on some group of leaders. The unity of our movement was formed by the combined efforts of many independent groups -- including the small civil disobedience (CD) "affinity groups" dedicated to decentralized decision making and mutual support.

One young adult's report described the flexible and spontaneous formation of groups for solidarity in jail (from Kaitlin Kuhwald's "A UU's Account"): The busses were full of innocent citizens and protesters alike and despite all differences they began to organize. They began to form into groups with a spokesperson and leader in each and whenever they were separated they would again form another group and report their last groups plans and agenda. Soon all of them were doing the same thing, they had cohesively formed a network and were all working together.

The most effective groups enjoyed informed and dedicated members, such as one young woman I met. She had recently completed a year of intensive and on-site international education about the devastating effects of WTO "neo-liberal" policies on communities around the world. Brimming with knowledge and enthusiasm, she was headed to the demonstrations with four companions -- probably part of her CD affinity group.

I can only hope that the light in her eyes still sparkled even after the police gassings, beatings, and other abuses in the concealment of arrest custody. She was not naive about the potential for police violence, but none of us could have anticipated the extent or viciousness of the civil rights violations, which far exceeded the routine brutality of other mass CD actions I've participated in.

I was deeply touched by these younger people, mostly in their twenties, who formed the bulk of the nonviolent civil disobedience protesters. Overwhelmingly, they were deeply committed to maintaining nonviolence -- even those who did not have the full CD training. (Unfortunately, probably 2/3's of them were untrained -- not realizing the importance of this training or otherwise swept up in the police raids or by the passion for justice that led many to last-minute decisions to hold the line against the WTO.)

I believe that the civil disobedience folks were doing some of the most personal and thorough work at the WTO. (For personal reasons, I wasn't up for jail time this time 'round.) The CD convergence trained people not only in nonviolence and CD but also in jail solidarity.

Those risking arrest wore a sticker declaring their intent to remain silent and their wish to speak with legal counsel -- a sticker that eliminated the need to speak, so that police could not single out for special (mis)treatment those with accents.

The police ignored the stickers, or, at least, they ignored the right to legal counsel -- and much of anything else. Nonetheless, the CD'ers persisted in using the intense experience of jail time for their own educational forums. These were much more personal forms of consciousness raising and transformations of mind, time, and space than those available "outside."

#### ***Beyond Intellect: A Deeper Movement***

For me, the cumulative impact of the horrific stories of WTO effects around the world (told at forums and teach-ins) plus the repeated abuses by police left me reeling. No, none of this was new to me, yet in such concentrated doses it overwhelmed the uplifting stories of successful resistance. I longed for a "forum" where we could mourn and keen together, comfort one another, and generally acknowledge the psychological wounding that leads us -- in self-protection -- to retreat to the narrow intellectual realm of statistics and analysis. A movement that addresses the fullness of our humanity is a more powerful movement.

I found no public mournings. Still, a few non-jail events did address more of my multiple facets. Of such events, I was most inspired by an evening sponsored by the Alliance for Sustainable Jobs and the Environmentalist (an outgrowth of the Headwaters movement, to protect some of California's old growth redwoods). It began with a superb free meal for those cold, wet, protesters who managed to arrive at the FUM despite the curfew and police blockades. The evenings' combination of song, political theater, food, and informative talks -- all around this heartening union of labor and environmentalists -- nourished me on many levels. An announcement at the end of the evening, calling for volunteers to pack up remaining food for some of the arrestees being released at distant Sand Point, reinforced my feeling of unity among all the protesters.

#### ***Building A World and A Movement Based On Heart, Embracing All***

Now, back home, I join you in seeking effective next steps.

Widespread outrage against invisible corporate domination at home and abuses of workers in developing countries has helped awaken the public to the issues. Let us reach out! I look at the example of Seattle, where it was the work of so many distinct and different groups that combined to make change. We don't need some one plan or master strategy.

What might work is an approach that allows a place for people of all kinds -- even corporate executives -- to join together in small or larger groupings, united in doing their best to improve the lives of all of us. We'll have to find ways to penetrate the media silence to help all of us learn about and understand what is happening. And we can take a cue from Art and Revolution, Reclaiming, and other such groups: our actions are greatly enlivened by creativity, art, theater, story, and music; floats, costumes, and giant puppets.

Eventually, the work of these many groups, increasingly well informed and touched on multiple levels, can converge in networks, alliances, and councils.

Who is your "affinity group"? Where are you sharing and developing creativity, information, and analysis? How are you linking to and coordinating with other organizations?

As two of the "alternative fortune cookies" we passed out said:

*The stories you share will spread a new  
vision for creative cooperation-operation.  
What Transforms Oppression?  
Wonderful Trustworthy Organizers!*

[Newsletters](#)

[GPVA](#)

### **Opinion: A Quantum Leap to Party Status: Virginia Greens Must Intensify Effort for the Year 2000**

by Roger Clarke

This year is the time for the Greens of Virginia (GOV) to achieve a major breakthrough. This year, GOV must raise its sights to achieve a firmly established position in the crucial decision-making process of Virginia politics. In doing so, it is important to remember that The Greens' primary purpose is in fact nothing other than to function fully, credibly and reliably as a political entity. But we will, and must be, different from the usual fare. There is nothing but our own limited imaginations keeping us from practicing a better, more humane, more connected brand of political behavior.

How can we reach this vital goal? We must, each and every one of us, stretch, expand and heighten our level of commitment, contribution and participation within the GOV framework. Each Virginia Green must substantially find his or her role and identity within this political party effort.

Each Green must overcome the political malaise and anomy that is pandemic today. In our time it is understandable that one may distrust and dislike all forms of politics but to continue to hold this visceral alienation, and yet to participate as a Green, inescapably yields the half-heartedness, torpor and amateurism that much too much slows our forward movement.

Our political project must aid its membership in consciously recovering a healthy, rehabilitated sense of what political citizenship is. When engaged in with openness and humility, rather than defiance and ego, the new Green politics becomes nothing less than pleasurable fellowship and esprit de corps flourishing. But an absence of cooperative searches for just compromises, through respectful comity, is dysfunctional. Our function is to carry forward a better politics.

Our success is measured by the speed of our advance and by the degree of transformation that we realize in our political methodology. To languish in fractious, dogmatic dithering, obscured yet further by free-floating, contentious personalizing is the old model of politics -- exactly the one that we repudiate. It will become an alien background which will fall away as we advance into superior methods and successful structures.

Recruitment into the GOV generally, and certainly also into the more delimited ranks who bear responsibility for defining and carrying-out Green work and planning is paramount. Let it be clear, the peripheral/occasional green is now in possession of a vital invitation to help in a year of heightened GOV activity. Likewise, the GOV leadership -- as well as the leadership of the locals -- is in possession of a matching obligation to turn its attention outward to embrace and welcome the new, and to open-up or "air-out" its musty workings, so that a heightened level of action may be born.

GOV growth and expansion is completely necessary this year in order to be substantial and cohesive enough to construct and maintain perennially hereafter a green party duly recognized and enfranchised by the Commonwealth. Come the end of the year 2000, the immense victory and historic significance of the achievement of "state party status" will have dwarfed and caused to recede any present internecine querulousness or blithe reticence.

We get there, we advance, we transform by gearing-up now to achieve this. The fact that this is our nation's presidential election year affords all Virginia greens and progressives a rare and unique chance to escalate to higher purpose, higher visibility, higher cohesion and higher effectiveness. We thus must enter into a realistic trade with whichever qualified Green presidential candidate emerges. The candidate will bring wide illumination of those issues most critical and GOV and the locals will gain an organizing tool that is accessible and understandable to all.

Delay, sophistry, and over-controlling concern do more than just hinder GOV advancement: it is indicative of our too easily accepted role as politically marginal, and perhaps too of a nagging lack of confidence; indicative of a partial disconnect from the steadily deteriorating conditions of the exploited underclasses, here and in the third world; indicative of a tacit insistence upon and resignation to a trajectory of greater travail and injustice for the foreseeable future -- even as we, ourselves, rather comfortably, attend our meetings, rattle-off our e-mails, and glance at our newsletters.

At all times remember -- and never forget -- that those who oppose our purpose very plainly lie outside the green arena, and that those broadly within the green arena must, to be effective, form a large, coherent, consensus coalition. In this inevitable politics, exhaustive fractiousness is entirely antithetical to any realization of any governance whatsoever.

GOV renewal and resurgence this year rests squarely upon a conscious process by which each of us is continuously dedicated to feeling community and purpose among fellow Greens. We must together agree to move forward to the next level of serious political engagement. Those of us at the center must reach outward; those of us at the periphery must step forward with a willing hand.

This year, Green politics in Virginia shall be new, not old; vigorous, not complaisant; commodious, not antagonistic; civil, not chaotic; growing, not divisive; open, not solipsed; responsive, not dilatory; real, not spectacle; effective, not a drill.

The leadership has its duty to set the table in 2000. And the wide membership has its duty to step up to the plate in 2000.

---

[Newsletters](#)

---

[GPVA](#)

---

## Fur-Free Friday

by Joseph Auth

Every year on "Fur-Free Friday," the day after Thanksgiving, animal rights groups unite in a nationwide protest against the fur trade during the busiest time of the year for stores which sell fur. This year the animal rights groups started their anti-fur campaigns early to counter the large marketing effort by the fur industry to reverse the trend of declining sales over the past decade. Among other tactics, non-violent civil disobedience has been used extensively to protest the sale of fur at stores such as Burlington Coat Factory, Macy's, Neiman Marcus, and many independent businesses. The result has been over 150 anti-fur activists arrested so far this year.

In Roanoke, local residents and students from Virginia Tech, Radford University, and Hollins University protested outside of Henri Kessler Furs and Outerwear every Saturday from early November through Christmas. They hoped to educate the public about what they call the "unethical killing of animals for vanity products" by chanting, holding signs of animals caught in traps, and passing out literature.

On Dec. 17, the protest escalated when Pierre Grzybowski from Virginia Tech and Bridgett Cherry from Radford University sat down in front of the double-doorway of Henri Kessler Furs and Outerwear, blocking the entrance of the store. The police warned Grzybowski and Cherry several times that they would be arrested if they did not move. Grzybowski and Cherry neither replied nor moved. Finally, when it was clear that they would not comply with the police officers' demands, Grzybowski and Cherry were handcuffed and carried to a waiting van. Even after being put into the van, Grzybowski continued to shout "End the bloody fur trade!" to which the supporters and protesters outside answered in unison: "End it now!"

After the arrests, the protest continued for another hour as police stood by and observed. Grzybowski and Cherry were released two hours later from the Roanoke City Jail, each charged with obstructing the entrance of a store. The court case is pending.

"Fur-Free Friday" was started in 1986 by Trans Species Unlimited (TSU) because they felt that there needed to be an increase in nationwide protests against the cruelties of the fur industry. This event has grown in popularity as more and more grassroots organizations join together in non-violent civil disobedience, making "Fur-Free Friday" one of the most recognized events in the movement against animal suffering.

Animal rights activists say that over 40 million animals are killed each year for their fur by trapping, neck-breaking, poison injection, gassing, and anal and vaginal electrocution. Before their untimely deaths, animals raised on farms live their entire lives in horribly cramped cages. Wild animals must suffer in the jaws of a trap for hours or days, until the trapper returns to finish them off. To make a full length fur coat, at least 55 wild mink, 100 squirrels, or 125 ermines must suffer and die.

Anti-fur protests take place in cities across Virginia, including Richmond, Charlottesville, and Washington D.C.

For more information on anti-fur campaigns in the Roanoke area, contact the author at [jauth@vt.edu](mailto:jauth@vt.edu), or Pierre Grzybowski at [pgrzybow@vt.edu](mailto:pgrzybow@vt.edu).

---

[Newsletters](#)

---

[GPVA](#)

---

## Welcome and Thank You

Welcome to Our New Members:

Blue Ridge Greens: James Clyburn  
 Central Virginia Greens: Darren Pace, Betty & Gilbert Black  
 Greens of Virginia: Molly Quinlan, Sammy Bauer, Alex Solomon, Emily Thornhill  
 NOVA Greens: Jesse Weiner, Heather Parker, Chris D'Amore, Erica Wilmer, Howard Rohr, JoAnn Benjamin, Donna Sicklesmith-Anderson, Cynthia Maahs, Andrew White  
 Rockbridge Greens: Anne Rivas, Gillie Campbell  
 Tidewater Greens: Joseph Catron, Michael Simoncelli & Lily Richards  
 Valley Greens: Amanda Center, Stephen Reynolds, Mariana Bowling, Patrick Moran

### Thank You, Recent Contributors:

Central Virginia Greens: Darren Pace, Betty & Gilbert Black  
 Greens of Virginia: Darren Pace, Sally Robertson, Betty & Gilbert Black  
 NOVA Greens: Howard Rohr, Chris Simmons, Andrew White  
 Rockbridge Greens: Mike Seeger, Gillie Campbell  
 Valley Greens: Cara & Kevin Swafford, Christina Bolgiano

---

[Newsletters](#)

---

[GPVA](#)

---

## The Greens of Virginia

<b>Editor:</b>	Aaron Feldman
<b>Layout:</b>	Gerry Cervenka
<b>Printing:</b>	xhigh graphics
<b>Contributing writers to this issue:</b>	Joseph Auth, SG; Roger Clarke, CVG; Darien De Lu, WILPF; David Frankel, NORML; Jim Lowenstern, NoVaG; Dean Myerson, ASGP; Eric Sheffield, RBG; Sherry Stanley, VG; Sandra Stuart, RBG

---

[Newsletters](#)

---

[GPVA](#)

---

---

Thanks to:  
[The Green Internet Society](#)  
for hosting this site!

---

*Send your comments & suggestions to the [Webweaver](#).*

**The Green Party of Virginia**  
*Latest Update: July 3, 2010*