

# The CAN-Did Press

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CITIZENS AWARENESS NETWORK  
ACT TODAY TO CHANGE TOMORROW...



## A Coalition to Stop the Nuke Industry in its Tracks!

CAN has organized three National Grassroots Leadership Summits on Nuclear Waste with grassroots groups throughout the country. We were the regional organizer for New England. The Summits focused on HLRW (High-Level Radioactive Waste) policy that can unify reactor and waste communities to oppose centralized interim storage, Yucca Mountain, and environmental racism initiatives promoted by the nuclear industry. We worked to create unified strategic actions on commercial HLRW policy including: a) Increased protections for on-site dry cask storage b) Opposition to Interim storage c) Transportation d) Yucca Mountain e) Permanent alternatives that are both scientifically sound and environmentally just. Over 125 people from all regions participated.

Member groups committed to create a plan and bring it back to the anti-nuclear community. Groups met for over 1 ½ years. Recently we organized webinars. Our goals are ambitious and with effective grassroots organizing they are attainable! We have done it before and we can do it again. If you are an organization interested in joining the campaign or want more information, contact CAN at can@nukebusters.org or 413-339-4374. You don't have to be an anti-nuclear group or work on nuclear issues to join the coalition. Much of our work is reaching beyond the usual suspects to achieve our goals.

### *The Coalition's multi-year campaign has a few "big picture" goals:*

1. Stop Yucca Mountain from becoming a permanent nuclear waste repository.
2. Stop any plan for consolidated/centralized interim storage.
3. Keep high-level radioactive waste as close to its current sites as possible and "harden" its storage to be as safe as possible.
4. Reduce the inherent dangers of storage of high-level radioactive waste involved in the decommissioning of nuclear power plants or other nuclear sites.

### *Principles We Are Committed to as a Movement*

These principles will guide our working together, inform our decision-making, and help us to hold ourselves and each other accountable in the campaign.

1. We are committed to stopping the production and reprocessing of radioactive waste.
2. We believe the isolation of radioactive waste is critical for protecting all living things and we are committed to working to ensure this isolation is accomplished.

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## Good News from the Pilgrim Reactor

Huge Success!! Cape Downwinders (CDW) spring ballot campaign had a final vote in the Cape Cod town of Sandwich in November. The non-binding public advisory question called for increased security, better quality dry casks, and hardened on-site storage of high-level nuclear waste at the Pilgrim reactor. The measure passed overwhelmingly in all thirteen Cape Cod towns that voted! Addressed to Governor Baker and the State Legislature to employ all means available to ensure public health and safety as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has failed its public mandate, Cape Downwinders will forward results to elected officials and Governor Baker and request a response.

Cape Downwinders continues to fight Holtec's plans for a CIS (Centralized Intermittent Storage) site in New Mexico. Information and documents are presented to the Pilgrim Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel from the Nuclear Issues Study Group and other local organizations as we support

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## C-10 Wrests Concrete Concessions from NRC

The C-10 Research and Education Foundation (www.c-10.org) undertook a decade long effort to obtain a rational decision from the NRC on how the concrete problem at New Hampshire's Seabrook atomic plant will be handled. We inserted ourselves in the NRC's formal review of the concrete monitoring methodology proposed by NextEra by challenging the "representativeness" of their unprecedented concrete testing procedures (carried out in TX, with concrete largely unrelated to Seabrook's), and the data derived from those tests. Our admission into the formal hearing process attracted the engagement of Prof Victor Saouma, a world-renowned expert in the Alkali Silica Reaction (ASR) problem plaguing Seabrook. Professor Saouma elected to champion our case without charge, because he saw it as an ethical obligation to represent the truth about ASR—and because he saw that the methods proposed by NextEra could not assure the safe operation of Seabrook through a proposed extended license—i.e. they could

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# VT Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel

The Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel (NDCAP) for Vermont Yankee met on September 21, 2020. Because of ongoing public health concerns the meeting of the full panel was virtual via the Internet. The use of the Microsoft Teams meeting platform allowed for significant public participation but was not without some problems. A few potential participants reported they could not connect into the meeting.

The virtual meetings of late have allowed for greater participation by stakeholders who live far from Vernon. Vermonters from all over the state as well as citizens from Texas and New Mexico have been participating. A growing number of public commenters have been asking the panel to have a discussion regarding nuclear waste policy and concerns about Centralized Interim Storage initiatives.

The following is an excerpt from a letter I received from Sen. Bernie Sanders on November 20, 2020 after writing to express concerns about Centralized Interim Storage:

“In response to this issue, Interim Storage Partners proposed to build a consolidated interim storage (CIS) facility for nuclear waste in West Texas. Under this plan, at least 5,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel would be transported to the CIS facility and then to the permanent storage site, which doesn’t currently exist. This proposal has raised many concerns about the impacts of high-level nuclear waste on the public and environmental health of communities in West Texas and along the shipping route. To my mind, at a time when millions of American families are struggling just to put food on the table, I do not see why we should spend billions of dollars on “Band-Aid” solutions that do not address the overall issue of long-term nuclear waste disposal.”- Senator Bernie Sanders

It is heartening to see that Bernie understands the many concerns we have with the Centralized Interim Storage of irradiated nuclear fuel.

NorthStar reported that segmentation work on the reactor is continuing. The reactor, which is highly radioactive, is being cut up and will be stored in a cask along with casks of irradiated fuel. There will ultimately be fifty-eight casks parked on the concrete pad at the site.

Additionally, as of the end of August of this year, 113 “low-level” radioactive waste shipments have been sent to the Waste Control Specialists facility in Andrews, Texas.

It was also reported that some of the buildings on the site have been torn down. A warehouse and the Advanced Off-Gas Building have been demolished.

If you would like to attend an NDCAP meeting please check the Department of Public Service web page at <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/electric/ndcap#Upcoming%20meetings>

- Chris Williams, Board member, CAN and NIRS (Nuclear Info and Resource Service)

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# Coalition to Stop Nuke Industry

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3. We are committed to preventing the unnecessary movement of radioactive waste AND working to make the waste as safe as possible at or nearby the sites where it is now. The local community should have input into how the waste is stored at these sites.

4. Our work will be grounded in a respect for all people, and we commit to rejecting oppressive solutions or actions and preventing the creation of “sacrifice” zones. We will fight to ensure that environmental racism is not used in deciding where waste should be stored.

5. We will engage diverse people in both the work of the campaign and the process to find possible long-term solutions for waste storage and its isolation.

6. We will build solidarity through strong collaboration and honoring the needs of local communities.

7. We are committed to sharing skills and knowledge across organizations, age ranges and communities, so that all skills and knowledge is respected and integrated throughout our movement.

8. As a movement, we are committed to non-violence.

9. We are committed to the equitable distribution of resources to do our work together.

10. We will work together to ensure that the recognized lands of indigenous people and tribes, and especially sacred areas, are not storage locations for radioactive waste.

11. We will work together to hold the nuclear industry and government officials and offices accountable for their actions, for enforcing our laws, and for honoring treaties—and for keeping us all as safe as possible.

- Deb Katz, Executive Director, CAN

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# Pilgrim Reactor

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their efforts to halt Holtec.

As a fundraiser for CDW Director Diane Turco’s trespassing trial (tentatively scheduled for May, 2021), a beautiful poster by illustrator Lance Hidy is available for sale at our website: [www.capedownwinders.info](http://www.capedownwinders.info). Each poster is signed by the artist. The universal message, Love Our Earth, Nuclear Free Now, resonates in this time of transition.

- Diane Turco, Executive Director, Cape Downwinders and Board member, CAN

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# Concessions from NRC

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not assure Seabrook's safe operation for the next ten years of its current license.

Washington D.C. attorney Diane Curran, master litigator before the NRC's judicial branch and long time friend of C-10, agreed to carry our case for more than a year without remuneration. It is clear that they know Seabrook's ASR could adversely impact thousands of nearby residents—in the event of a severe earthquake that could challenge the integrity of the compromised containment structure. Prof. Saouma and Attorney Curran also know that the monitoring and mitigation methods approved for Seabrook will be the template for ASR management at other reactors found to have ASR cracking their walls—within the US, and perhaps beyond. For these reasons they continue to collaborate on our behalf.

Those of us on the team of volunteers at C-10 wanted an NRC decision to deny adoption of NextEra's ASR monitoring proposal, so that they would 1) have to derive their data from testing truly representative concrete samples—such as from Seabrook's structures; and 2) delay approval of the 20 year extension for Seabrook's operating license unless and until a scientifically peer reviewed methodology is approved. But of course, the NRC is in the business of "clearing the path" so their fleet of atomic reactors can keep running. NRC Staff pushed license extension beyond reach through a scheduling gambit: they approved the extra 20 years fully eight months before Prof. Saouma could provide the only independent expert peer review of NextEra's methods in a formal hearing!

On August 21, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) issued their initial decision, and true-to-form, they did not deny approval of the NextEra's license amendment. They did, however, insist on more thorough and more frequent monitoring on four fronts. For one example, whereas NextEra's plan called for concrete expansion monitoring at intervals up to ten years, NRC requires monitoring every six months.

## *NRC's changes to NextEra's concrete monitoring protocols*

1. Monitoring concrete expansion—NextEra will have to increase the frequency of instrumentation monitoring by twenty-fold, moving from proposed intervals as long as ten years, up to monitoring every six months.

2. Monitoring reinforced steel—Under certain conditions, NextEra must develop a monitoring program to either anticipate or monitor rebar failures.

3. Knowing when to monitor more aggressively—If the degradation-related expansion rate in any area of a "seismic

Category I" structure significantly exceeds 0.2mm/m per year, NextEra must evaluate whether to implement more frequent monitoring.

4. Looking deep inside the concrete—Each concrete core extracted from Seabrook must undergo a detailed microscopic petrographic evaluation to detect micro cracks.

## *One Big Board*

Having written most of the original petition to intervene in 2017, and then acting as Chair of C-10's working group on the ASR litigation, I was repeatedly struck by the uncanny similarity of NRC Staff's positions on our case to those of NextEra's; there was so little daylight between them that, at times, I mused one could simply exchange one document for the other. We all knew this was a quixotic campaign, but there is a level which the near-impossibility of ordinary citizens to gain redress on their grievances in the face of corporate power reflects the challenge to democratic rights, of which many are now painfully aware, in the wider political realm. Not only does C-10 monitor the viability of this nearby atomic reactor, but through that process we monitor the health of our democracy. The fact that our organization, with the assistance of a world-renowned expert and a veteran lawyer, could barely gain a concession from a regulatory agency ostensibly here to protect the public health and safety is a sobering shot!

I am reminded of something Wendell Berry said in "The Unsettling of America," way back in the '70s, about forms of oppression. I can only paraphrase; but his insight, and his warning, is "...whatever forms of oppression are employed by the ruling elite against the most vulnerable—if not challenged and defeated—would eventually be trained on everyone not part of the ruling elite." C-10's campaign of the last decade illustrates, for me, how the struggle for a safe and sustainable earth for our great grandchildren, is truly a struggle for civil rights for all. As long as the nuclear industry sees a path to park their radioactive waste on First Nations' land out west, that same industry will see fit to operate compromised atomic reactors in the midst of huge summer beach populations out east. One could bet on it.

It's all one big board for them; and they're "running the table."

- Christopher Nord, C-10 Research and Education Foundation and CAN Board Member

## **CAN Contacts**

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**[www.nukebusters.org](http://www.nukebusters.org)**

## ***Thank You from CAN Staff & Board*** **We couldn't do it without you!**

*Bob Bady • Beyond Nuclear • Boston Downwinders  
C-10 Foundation • Paul Burton • Cape Downwinders  
Connie Childs • Lionel Delevingne • Court Dorsey  
Kristina Graham • Guacamole Foundation • Gerry Hersh  
Julian Mejia • New England Grassroots Environmental Fund  
Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS)  
Rosengarten Foundation • Rothschild Foundation  
Michael Schreiber • Shantigar Foundation  
Amy Shollenberger • Bob Stannard  
Van Itallie Foundation  
Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance*

# A Sane Response to a Crazy World

In every good film project, story is the guiding principle. It's what everyone in the production rallies around. From the producer, to the director and the actors, to the sound, lighting and costume designers: everyone is an artist, and the creative process starts with the script.

In non-fiction, a parallel principle applies—deliver the message. Everything has to serve that purpose, and if it doesn't, we can't use it. If we can communicate clearly, concisely, and be interesting too, even better.

Having long internalized these basics, what stands out most about every project—especially this one—is the people bringing it to life. This project was different for me; in my role as the hired gun director, I didn't know what to expect from a team of activists.

Here's what I found... to start with, CAN is undoubtedly a cast of characters. They would have to be: who else would devote themselves to the problems of humanities most dangerous and toxic materials that no one else wants to deal with? What average person dedicates their time and energy to fighting powerful well-funded corporate interests at the level of grassroots? Ya' gotta' be just the right kind of nuts!

The next quality I noticed is passion. Everyone I've met is extremely knowledgeable about the science, the political landscape, how the two go together, the history of those dynamics, and a sense of what is most important now... and they seem to think about those things deeply every day.

Most impressively, I've found everyone to be adaptable. My



*The CAN Video Team*

set of very different skills were immediately embraced as valuable because of their differences. Where performers often have ego, we just do things if they make sense and might be effective, wherever the idea came from. Not only is there no red tape, a good idea may find itself being executed seemingly as it's being spoken.

In that spirit, I was immediately empowered to bring in student editors. This was especially exciting to me: providing young artists a creative piece to edit to the client's specs; real world experience that can help forward their

careers. They also got to understand and engage in the topic, and like the rest of us, loved having Will Nukem's humor to help us tell the story.

For all these reasons, working with CAN has been rewarding. I've learned that the ultimate goals of CAN—as I see them, ending the use of dangerous and unaffordable nuclear power and finding solutions to deal with nuclear waste—are as urgent and necessary as they are audacious. The challenges are immense.

Somehow, showing up to collaborate with talented and caring people serves to soothe the heartache of the situation, if only a little bit. Maybe, instead of being any kind of nuts, it's actually a sane response to a crazy world.

- Michael Schreiber, Director of "Nukes to Save the Climate?"

You've Got to be Kidding!"

*Michael Schreiber, program director for the Shantigar Foundation, heads up the production team with board member Kimberly Medeiros and two students from LaGuardia Community College in Queens (NY), Kristina Graham and Julian Mejia, who provided the editing.*



*Julian Mejia*



*Kristina Graham*



*Michael Schreiber*

# Nuclear Power to Save the Climate? You Gotta be Kidding!

We are pleased to present our self-produced video, “Nuclear Power to Save the Climate? You Gotta be Kidding!” explaining why atomic power is completely unsuitable as a “bridge” energy source to a green sustainable future. This video features CAN organizers addressing five lies the industry promotes about nuclear power.

We planned to offer “in-person” presentations followed by a Q&A on why nukes are no answer to climate change. We decided to do this because 40 percent of all environmental groups have not taken a stand on nuclear power and climate.

The pandemic has changed all of that! What we have created is a 13-minute video addressing the five most frequently asked questions about nuclear power. The video is informative and entertaining. We hope you will watch the video and share it with your friends and mailing lists.

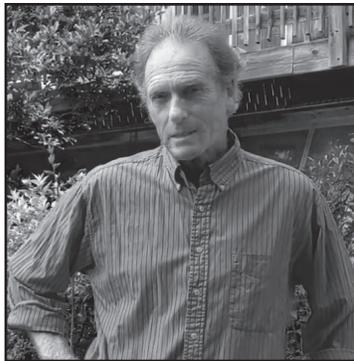
We are available to show the video on Zoom followed by a Q&A. Our Zoom workshop, in addition to showing the video, will include the following topics:

- Why Nukes are not the answer to climate change.
- Nuclear Waste: a problem without a solution.
- Environmental Racism: which communities are targeted and why they are targeted for nuclear waste disposal.
- Update on Vermont Yankee decommissioning.

**The video is on YouTube at: [https://youtu.be/b69v\\_hHOue8](https://youtu.be/b69v_hHOue8) or go to [www.nukebusters.org](http://www.nukebusters.org).**

## Welcome to our new Board Members!

**Christopher Nord** lives in Newbury, MA and is a residential builder, father of one son (40), and a lecturer on energy and the environment. Chris is also a Co-founder and Board member of C-10 Research and Ed Foundation; the Founder of Peace Trainers Association, a Founding member and non-violence trainer of the Clamshell Alliance (1976), and lecturer and creator/producer of anti-nuclear slide and video presentations.



**Schuyler Gould** is a retired building contractor living in Brattleboro, Vermont, within sight from the tallest pine tree in his backyard of Vermont Yankee. He is a past president of New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution.

# Response to Comments Left On CAN's YouTube Video Posting

The usual suspects are here again—long on indignation, and baseless claims—not a single challenge to the facts presented in CAN's video, “Nuclear Power to Save the Climate? You Gotta be Kidding!” (on YouTube at [https://youtu.be/b69v\\_hHOue8](https://youtu.be/b69v_hHOue8)).

They are obviously paid to pick their noses, waiting to jump down the throat of any and every body that dares to question the ultimate glory and wisdom of splitting the atom. Unfortunately, tragically, they are wrong in their slavish attachment to a mode of thinking—use, abuse, abandon—that in fact threatens civilization.

They cherry pick their facts—“low” even “zero” carbon emissions—without explaining that it represents only a narrow slice of the life cycle of nuclear power production.

Not once have I heard reference from the nuclear industry about the legacy of hundreds of thousands of lives shattered and prematurely debilitated and ended by the ongoing Chernobyl debacle.

Perhaps more importantly to its immediate audience here in the United States, the nuclear power industry ignores the tens of thousands of individuals uprooted and sickened by and still at risk from the triple reactor meltdowns at Fukushima Daiichi. It prefers to tout “maybe one” death from cancer!

Perhaps more insidiously are the suppressed statistics proving increased health risks to those living in the vicinity of operating plants, and even more remotely those who mine, process, and reprocess uranium and spent nuclear fuel.

For them, it's a bowl full of cherries out there just waiting to be picked.

Oh right! Don't forget the High-Level Nuclear Waste, or as they like to call it, “spent fuel.” Truth is, it's hardly “spent.” After using less than 10 percent of the potential energy in highly enriched uranium, we are left with a witch's brew of unnatural elements which must be isolated from the environment for at least a quarter million years. “Not our problem!” they say. “If the government would just do what it promised long ago, there should be no problem with our making more, and more, and more of the stuff.”

Ahh, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We can't figure out what to do with five pounds of the stuff, much less the near 100,000 tons, and counting, that we currently have on our hands. Still, “not to worry.” From the World Nuclear Association website, “Nuclear waste is neither particularly hazardous nor hard to manage relative to other toxic industrial waste.” Hey, it's a regular cup o' tea!

Watch the video. Get involved. Your life, and the lives of your children, and their children, and their children, and... depends on it.

- Schuyler Gould, CAN Board member

# We Call This Environmental Racism & Nuclear Colonialism

The push by neighbors to get the radioactive waste out of communities near reactors is understandable. The desire to protect our families, friends, and neighbors is the very same reason that our communities in New Mexico and Texas do not want that dangerous waste coming here.

There are two proposals to “wasteland” the Southwest and make the region around the southeast corner of New Mexico a national sacrifice zone. Specifically, Holtec International proposes to build and operate a so-called “temporary” nuclear waste dump adjacent to Laguna Gatuna, an ephemeral body of water. It’s just 13 miles north of the Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP), which is a deep geological repository for waste generated by the nuclear weapons industry. The second proposal is by Waste Control Specialists (WCS) working with the French company Orano (formerly Arreva) to build a “temporary” waste facility approximately 40 miles east of Laguna Gatuna along the New Mexico/Texas imaginary state line.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has been checking off their required legal obligations in the license application process for both sites. Recently, the public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statements for both dumps have shown a willingness of the NRC to push forward these proposals despite the urgent requests from the public and elected officials of both states to pause the process until the international health crisis of Covid-19 has passed. The NRC did pause the application process for a few years when WCS went through a financial crisis, but they didn’t pause when they received letters from the governors of both states and a joint letter from all of New Mexico’s Congressional Delegation!

We call this environmental racism when government and industry push projects that will not only adversely impact communities of color, but further overburden our communities that already

have environmental issues of contamination that are not being addressed. These issues usually lead to health problems that are also overlooked and do not receive equitable resources thus leading to loss of life and ultimately the loss of cultural knowledge and resources.

As an indigenous person, I see these two proposals as forms of nuclear colonialism.

The genocide of indigenous peoples and the theft and occupation of our homelands is not history, it continues in the forms of extractive industry, of commodification and commercialization of water, and so many other capitalistic endeavors, including these proposals of waste storage that are also being pushed as “economic development” through reprocessing of that waste.

As a new Board Member of CAN, this is my first write up for the *CAN-Did Press* and this is just a small introduction of my worldview. Next time, I will have more to say about the uranium mining history and the so-called cleanup that is underway in the Churchrock, New Mexico area where the world’s largest Uranium spill happened on July 16, 1979. In New Mexico, there are many folks working to stop or mitigate the harm from the nuclear industry and we will continue to fight Holtec and WCS, as well as proposed expansions at Los Alamos National Labs and WIPP, transport of radioactive wastes, and of course any threats of new uranium mining.

- Leona Morgan, Community Organizer, Nuclear Issues Study Group and CAN Board Member



## Welcome to our new Board Members!



Ann Darling, right

with elders, in the battered women’s movement, in early education and family support, and currently at an anti-poverty agency where she does grant writing, community needs assessment, and strategic planning.

Ann has one son, who grew up in Brattleboro, Vermont. It was her commitment to make the world safer for him that led her to working with the Safe and Green Campaign to shut down Vermont Yankee. To the CAN Board, she brings an enduring passion and persistence around nuclear issues, as well as grant writing and community organizing expertise.

Ann Darling lived for over half her life in southeastern Vermont and now resides in western Massachusetts. When she’s not working on nuclear power issues, she is a professional social worker. In her career she has worked

Diane Turco lives in Harwich, MA with her spouse, Tom, of 43 years. She was a teacher for children with intensive special needs, beginning with deinstitution-

alization at Paul Dever State School in Taunton in 1976 and retiring from Harwich Public Schools in 2012. As a new mother in 1981 and feeling responsible for the next generation, she got involved in issues of nuclear war and nuclear power after hearing Dr. Helen Caldicott speak in Boston. She joined the South Shore Peace Coalition, taking part in actions with the Nuclear Freeze Campaign. Moving to the Cape in 1982, she connected with Citizens at Risk: Cape Cod, which evolved into Cape Downwinders. Diane organized rallies, demonstrations, educational programs, and legislative lobbying. She also was a columnist for the *Barnstable Patriot* and spent jail time with colleagues for nonviolent direct actions. Investigating, educating, and agitating for the end of nuclear power and safe decommissioning is her continued work as the current director of Cape Downwinders.



Diane Turco, left