



NEWS

www.baaqmd.gov

**For Immediate Release
July 1, 2003**

**Contact: Luna Salaver 415.749.5196
cell 415.760.0283**

Announcing the 2003 Clean Air Champions!

**Seven Clean Air Champions from
Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Santa Clara and San Francisco counties
will be honored July 16, 2003**

For the first time in Clean Air Champion history, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District)--along with the American Lung Association, RIDES for Bay Area Commuters and the U.S. EPA--is honoring *seven* Clean Air Champions for their exceptional efforts towards clean air.

"We are pleased to recognize so many Clean Air Champions this year," said Air District Executive Officer William C. Norton. "A considerable winners circle shows that more people are choosing to go above and beyond to protect our air!"

This year's winners include:

- a family from **Walnut Creek** and a mother from the city of **Alameda** who have committed to make clean air choices as part of their daily lives,
- a reverend from **San Francisco** who promotes an interfaith movement towards alternative energy to reduce global warming,
- a **Marin County** resident who advocates a smoke-free environment to protect indoor air,
- the general manager of an **Alameda County** business park who tirelessly promotes alternative commute modes in the Tri-Valley area,
- the **Port of Oakland** for being in the forefront of regional ports by adopting numerous clean air projects, not only at the harbor but at the Oakland Airport as well,
- the first waste hauler in the Bay Area that has replaced 95% of the dirty diesel garbage trucks in its community, protecting **Sunnyvale** residents from toxic diesel emissions.

The 2003 Clean Air Champions will be honored at a public presentation Wednesday, July 16, 2003, 939 Ellis Street, San Francisco in the 7th floor Board room. The ceremony will begin at 9:30.

(MORE)

About the Winners

The Brandts of Walnut Creek

With two jobs and a young child in daycare, the Brandts of Walnut Creek could be excused for driving alone to work in two separate cars. But they don't. In a personal effort to help keep the air clean from polluting car emissions, John and Pauline Brandt use a combination of carpooling, walking and public transportation each day to get their daughter to school and themselves to their jobs at Chevron Texaco in San Ramon. "It would certainly be easier and a little faster to just hop in two cars every morning," said John. "But we've chosen an alternative that not only allows us to get by with one car and avoid the grueling traffic on 680, but that also has a positive impact on our environment."

The Brandts encourage others to follow their example by advising colleagues on how to use commute alternatives to driving alone and by participating in a local neighborhood association that deals with local Board of Supervisor meetings when transportation issues are discussed. By bucking the multi-car, SUV trend and making other environmentally-friendly lifestyle choices, the Brandts prove that simple, individual actions can and do make a difference.

Lucy Gigli of Alameda

Lucy Gigli is the founder of Bike Alameda, an advocacy group created to inform residents about the benefits and joys of bicycling. Practicing what she preaches, people often see her bringing her kids to school in a bike trailer or shopping around with a stroller. An avid gardener, she refuses to use any gas powered garden tools (including leaf blowers that pollute by sound and exhaust). She also does not use pesticides and other environmentally harmful consumer products. Lucy is admired for her clean air lifestyle as was nominated by a member of her community who is inspired by Lucy's choices.

"I am very happy that my efforts to be environmentally friendly--through walking, biking and being selective on what products I use —have been recognized," said Lucy. "I hope that the award can inspire more people to think that everyone of us can make an impact on air quality."

San Francisco Rev. Sally Grover Bingham

The Rev. Sally Grover Bingham is a Priest in the Diocese of California currently working as the Environmental Minister at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. She has been the chair of the Episcopal Diocesan Commission for the Environment for many years. Sally has been active in the environmental community for twenty years and serves on the national board of the Environmental Defense Fund.

She is the founder and executive director of The Regeneration Project, a nonprofit ministry, at this time, focusing on a response to global climate change. This particular initiative is called Episcopal Power and Light. The Episcopal model has developed into an interfaith one in several states in the US and Canada.

Sally has brought widespread attention to the linkage between ecological issues and the Christian Faith. She was appointed by Mayor Willie Brown to serve on the Commission on the Environment for the City and County of San Francisco.

She walks whenever possible, drives a hybrid vehicle and has led an active campaign to distribute compact fluorescent light bulbs as a means of improving air quality. As a matter of fact, she is a tireless advocate for alternative energy technology as a means of reducing use of polluting fossil fuels.

(MORE)

2003 Clean Air Champions

page 3

A cancer survivor, she brings her experience and passion to her ministry, connecting human health and the environment. Perhaps summing up her social activism she declares, "We are called not just to believe in something, but to put our faith into action."

Walt Bilofsky

If you appreciate the cleaner air inside public buildings in Marin County and elsewhere, you can thank Walt Bilofsky. For almost 30 years, Walt has championed the cause of a smoke free environment. As a volunteer tobacco control advocate, he has promoted the enactment of more than 30 local smoking ordinances in Massachusetts and California. Bilofsky was an officer of GASP of Massachusetts in 1975-76, a director of California GASP from 1978 to 1984, and has been co-chair of the Smoke Free Marin County Coalition since 1992. He served on the steering committee of the 1980 California statewide No Smoking Sections ballot initiative. He's been the director of Americans for Nonsmokers Rights since its founding in 1982, and served as its president for two years. Few people know as much as Walt about clean indoor air ordinances, how they work and how they should be enforced. As leader of the Marin coalition, he has educated dozens of local lawmakers about the importance of a smoke free environment in public buildings. It's no coincidence that this year Marin County received the Platinum Lung Award from the state American Lung Association for the highest compliance with clean indoor air laws in California.

"It's exciting to be honored for helping clear toxic tobacco smoke out of the air we all breathe," said Walt. "But the real credit goes to millions of Californian smokers and nonsmokers who, in just one generation, have understood this health hazard, changed the culture of public smoking, and made us a world leader in healthy indoor air."

James Paxson

As general manager of the Hacienda Business Park (Alameda County), James Paxson is one of the leading Bay Area advocates for choosing commute alternatives that impact cleaner air. This commitment extends beyond the boundaries of Hacienda's comprehensive commute alternatives program. Paxson takes a leadership role in a number of projects and committees designed to educate the public on ways to reduce traffic congestion and average vehicle ridership locally and regionally and, as a consequence, reduce levels of harmful air pollutants associated with motor vehicles.

"I truly believe that the success of efforts to improve air quality (and many other social and environmental problems) lies in making the solutions as much a part of the every day as possible and integrating those solutions into what you do to a level that they are not extraordinary but common place," said James. "The alternatives have been made part of the norm and, more and more, are considered as a choice among equals; even to driving alone. I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to work toward developing this level of integration into the work that I do at Hacienda because I believe that it not only simultaneously addresses several needs but fundamentally improves the quality of what we offer as a living and working environment."

Port of Oakland/Oakland Airport

Since 1999 the Port of Oakland and Oakland Airport have adopted numerous clean air programs that have put this fast growing airport on the forefront of environmentally sustainable development. Among its many clean air programs, the airport has a compressed natural gas (CNG) station that serves both the community and the airport, 30 electric vehicles for use at the

(MORE)

2003 Clean Air Champions

page 4

airport and seaport and eight electric charging stations for airport and public use. The Port has adopted requirements for the use of alternative fuels by taxis, shuttles and ground service equipment that are stricter than those of any Northern California airport. In addition to airport programs, the Port of Oakland has an 8.9 million dollar air quality mitigation program to reduce pollution from diesel engines at maritime facilities.

"We are delighted to be recognized as a Clean Air Champion," said Harold Jones, director of communications at the Port of Oakland. "The use of zero-emission electric cars at the airport and retrofitting a tugboat with a cleaner burning diesel engine are just two examples of the many links in the Port's chain of air quality improvement efforts. It's important to us to operate and build for the future in a sustainable way, which means a triple bottom-line approach of economic vitality, environmental responsibility and social equity."

Specialty Solid Waste and Recycling

Specialty Solid Waste and Recycling is the City of Sunnyvale's franchised refuse and recycling hauler that is implementing the change from diesel to compressed natural gas (CNG) garbage trucks. The conversion is 95% complete. Implementing this change will prevent over 36 tons of toxic diesel emissions from being released into the air.

Sunnyvale Mayor Julia Miller said, "In my roles as Mayor of Sunnyvale and as a Director of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Board, I work hard to improve the quality of our air. As an example, Sunnyvale uses alternative-fuel vehicles in our city fleet. I'm proud to see our refuse contractor, Specialty Solid Waste & Recycling, headed by Jerry Nabhan, being recognized for their outstanding efforts for having a CNG fleet of trucks, which is a first in the Bay Area."

Specialty Solid Waste and Recycling also has a 24-hour CNG refueling station open to the public. This station provides a vital link in the chain of CNG stations in Northern California, making CNG a viable clean fuel alternative for commuters.

"Our entire staff here at Specialty Solid Waste & Recycling has worked on this project side-by-side with the City of Sunnyvale for over three years, and we feel very honored to have our environmental efforts recognized by the Air District," said, Jerry Nabhan, General Manager. "In making the transition to clean fuels to help our environment, we discovered that the drivers actually prefer the CNG trucks over the old diesels! And, Sunnyvale residents have commented that they enjoy having their neighborhoods serviced by the quieter, cleaner CNG refuse and recycling trucks. In addition, we are gratified to find that our publicly accessible CNG fueling station is being utilized daily by a wide variety of vehicles, from school buses to private automobiles, contributing to better air quality for the whole Bay Area."

###