



Celebrating Earth Day all month long

Union rights fight
moves to Central Pa

Overdraft fees taking
customers by surprise

Exclusive interview with
M.P. George Galloway

Jack Matson: From
entrepreneur to ecopreneur:

Geothermal picks up steam:
under new stimulus plan

PSU workers to see
wage increases in July

Black Caucus remembers
protests of 2001

Musician donates to shelter

Composting 101, alternative
medicine filling gaps, pets
and the economy and more

April 2009

There's something in the air

Centre County air polluters
meet 21st century challenges

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general manager and managing editor
Suzan Erem
voices@voicesweb.org

Politics and Economics
Zac Taylor
politics@voicesweb.org

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community@voicesweb.org

University
Tamara Conrad
university@voicesweb.com

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Heather Simmons
environment@voicesweb.org

Arts and Entertainment
Adam Eshleman
arts@voicesweb.org

Opinion
Paul Durrenberger
oped@voicesweb.org

webmaster
Bill Eichman
4bille@windstream.net

ART and DESIGN
Mali Campbell, Hollie Besch, Doug Adler

COVER PHOTOGRAPHER
Doug Bauman

CIRCULATION
Kevin Handwerk
circulation@voicesweb.org

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES
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advertising@voicesweb.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
president
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4bille@windstream.net

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Shrinking and growing all at once

Over the last few years, I've sometimes felt like Alice in Wonderland when it comes to the size of our paper. This last year we grew from 24 pages to 28 pages, but in the last four years our actual paper size has been trimmed twice.

Our printer has now informed us that due to high paper costs, *Voices* and other tabloid-size papers it prints are losing another inch off the top. We're making due, and as soon as we gain enough advertising support to pay the difference, we'll add pages to make up for it. It's a priority.

Priorities say a lot about a person and a paper. I wasn't all that surprised recently when our local corporate daily designated its advertising manager as the new publisher. When I worked in a Gannett newsroom, reporters and editors would watch the advertising department enjoy the nicer work

**from the desk of managing editor
Suzan Erem**

space and the catered hot lunch once a month while we munched on day-old grocery store doughnuts we bought for each other. As much as we journalism majors wanted to believe news was the life blood of the newspaper, everyone could see that advertising was the heart that pumped it.

We hear a lot about the demise of dailies around the country these days. Maybe that will happen to all newspapers, including *Voices*, some day. I hope not. I'd like to think it's the upside-down priorities of the big dailies that got them where they are now. When advertising dollars became more important than the watchdog function the journalism provided, something shifted. Corporations have sucked papers dry for the profit they gained from selling ads based on circulation instead of on quality journalism. Eventually subscriptions fell off and dailies had to supplement that paid circulation by dropping bundles of new, free publications all over town (and, locally speaking, sometimes all over *Voices*).

They say the Internet is to blame. I just find it hard to believe that the fast-paced world of the Internet could so easily sap

print readers away from newspapers. Web readers are not known for spending 30 minutes or more reading to the end of an investigative piece, yet that's what print readers expect to do with a good newspaper.

No doubt, even (and especially) *Voices* needs advertisers to continue to grow, to pay the printer and some day to pay writers, editors, designers and photographers for the professional services they now donate to *Voices*. But will we ever incur the costs of paying profits to distant stockholders? Will we ever subsidize non-news-related businesses in some grand corporation?

No. As we continue to chart our course, I am grateful to our supporters who make creating this paper worth the time and energy we volunteers put into it. I'm grateful to those who kept it going all these years, to those who will come after and to the students we train along the way. I can't accept the death of newspapers yet, because this one is growing faster than ever.

Please enjoy our emphasis on the environment this month. Like February's emphasis on black history, and March's on women's issues, we thought it timely to highlight the environment in honor of Earth Day. If *you* have an idea for a special theme, jump right in and let us know.

LETTERS POLICY

Voices encourages letters commenting on local issues. Letters should be typewritten and a maximum of 250 words. Include address and phone number for verification. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and to reject those deemed beyond the limits of good taste. Due to space limitations, we cannot guarantee publication of all letters. Letters become the property of *Voices of Central Pennsylvania*. E-mail to oped@voicesweb.org. All opinions expressed in the Opinion Section or designated as commentary or review are those of the authors, not of *Voices of Central Pennsylvania*.

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Voices of Central Pennsylvania
133 S. Allen St.
State College, PA 16801
TELEPHONE:
(814) 234-1699
ON THE WEB:
voices@voicesweb.org
www.voicesweb.org

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