

# Pure Facts

Newsletter of the Feingold® Associations of the United States



October, 1992

Vol. 16, No. 8

## The Finances of Helping Hyperactive/ADD Kids

When someone comes up with a better way to help troubled children everyone cheers...right? Not necessarily.

Parents who call the association often ask: "Why didn't I learn about you long ago?" It's a simple question, but the answer is not. The answer is tied up with some of the best and worst impulses of humans, and particularly with our complex American brand of capitalism. At its best, capitalism gives rise to the genius of Thomas Edison, and at its worst it breeds such stars of the Greedy Eighties as Ivan Boesky. Business and profit are essential to our lifestyle, but whenever huge sums of money and vested interests are present there is always the potential that the public trust will be abused (as we saw in the scandals which rocked the savings and loan associations).

Because the Feingold Program removes the most widely used synthetic food additives, it excludes the majority of highly processed (highly profitable) foods found in the supermarket. This is at the heart of the reason why families have so much difficulty finding out

about the Feingold Association and obtaining accurate information about our work.

Dr. Feingold first announced his findings to the American Medical Association in 1973. He understood the economic impact his work could have on companies that manufacture and use these chemicals, and attempted to meet with them to discuss the issues. Instead of dialogue, his efforts were met with attacks from the lobby/trade group representing the affected industries. In the years which have followed, a great deal of time, effort and money has been spent to deny the issues rather than address them.

The steps a company or industry will take to protect its interests can be both ambitious and creative. They include: hire professionals to serve as "consultants"; use the clout of advertising to discourage a magazine from printing negative articles; buy out magazines which have been critical and replace the staff with sympathetic editors; fund

studies designed to support the desired results; report negative studies as positive and convince scientists who conducted them to reverse themselves; provide funding to university departments of nutrition/public health; donate money to political candidates in exchange for "friendly" appointments; influence the policies of professional groups through donated money

The issue of hyperactivity and ADD as it relates to industry is unique. Unlike typical complaints companies receive, Feingold members do not object because a chemical will cause cancer in twenty years, contribute to global warming, or damage the ozone layer. While they are concerned about these issues, their main concern is that it will make their child go bonkers within about two hours after he eats it.

Over the years, this criticism has met with various responses. They include: tell the parents they simply imagine their child reacts to additives and im-

*Continued on page 3*

## When the Goblins go out Gobblin'

Pull out your trusty Feingold Handbook and review the section on dealing with Halloween foods. This is a good time to visit your nearby health food store for goodies, or to put in a fast call to Giambri's or the Squirrel's Nest. You may find the natural version of Palmer Halloween candies at drug stores, discount stores, and some supermarkets. Check the ingredient list to confirm the product does not contain synthetic vanilla (vanillin).

A brand new addition to our Foodlist is **Melster's Peanut Butter Kisses**,



which come wrapped in orange or black waxed paper

Be aware that face paint can trigger a reaction. If you're looking for a natural red, check your School Year Calendar for Paul Penders and Real Purity makeups. Both have cosmetics (including real RED lipstick) that are made from natural ingredients and should be well tolerated.

Put a coat of cold cream on the child's face first and allow it to dry, then apply the makeup. This should make the washing off easier.

The Feingold® Associations of the United States, Inc., founded in 1976, are non-profit volunteer organizations whose purposes are to support their members in the implementation of the Feingold Program and to generate public awareness of the potential role of foods and synthetic additives in behavior, learning and health problems. The program is based on a diet eliminating synthetic colors, synthetic flavors, and the preservatives BHA, BHT, and TBHQ.

# Healthy Skepticism

by Lynn Murphy

Well I did it again. Someone kick me please. I continually fall prey to the so-called experts. I forget the real expert on me and my sensitivities...that's me and only me.

I believed the exterminator that the poison that would kill every termite and other living thing in my house would leave no residue. *They* said our house would be safe for my family to return to after a few hours of airing out. *They* said no one has ever had trouble with it. *They* don't know what *they* are talking about when it comes to me. My throat started to close up after being in the house just 10 minutes.

The gas company wouldn't send a worker to turn the gas back on until 24 hours after the airing out began. Do they know something the exterminator expert doesn't know?

When I think about it, I guess I *wanted* to believe there would be no problem...so I did, even though it didn't make any sense.

I should have known that as a consumer of anything, I shouldn't take it on faith that the "experts" who are trying to sell me something, have my best interest in mind. After all, we see it all over.

**cigarettes** - We all know to view the tobacco company's research showing the lack of dangers of smoking and second-hand smoke with healthy skepticism.

**air pollution** - Industry scientists and environmental scientists have opposing points of view. Is there any question why?

**food additives** - The same applies to chemicals added to our food. The food company's research says not to worry about these chemicals; sensitive consumers know otherwise.

**The latest wonder drug** that the drug company is promoting to doctors may look wonderful now, but we have seen how today's miracles can turn into tomorrow's disasters. We all want to believe the miracle. Companies rush to be the first one to put it on the market.

### **The bottom line with all these controversial issues:**

No matter what the truth ends up being, the organization with the most money for advertising will sway the consumer over to their side. Unless, of course, the consumer is armed with healthy skepticism and takes the time to research the facts.

### **How do you research the facts?**

Read labels - on everything. Know what you're buying; be aware and concerned about what you're putting in your body. Realize that everything is not listed on the label, but armed with your Feingold Foodlist you've got a wealth of knowledge.

### **Ask questions of your doctor.**

How long has this medication or treatment been used? What are the known side effects? *How* and *who* conducted the testing? Then weigh the benefits against the risks. The



doctor may know a lot of things, but what's best for you only *you* can decide. That's where your education is important. Get all the advice you can; get a second opinion if you wish and, if it's still not right for you, go elsewhere for information. If your doctor doesn't appreciate your opinions or questions, it's time to get a new doctor.

### **Have confidence in yourself.**

Get rid of any thoughts such as "The expert is smarter than me and if the expert doesn't have any doubt, then it must be right." Remember, you are the expert on you.

### **How do you become a skeptic?**

Consider the source of your information. Research is not always without bias. Because there is stiff competition for money, testing laboratories have an incentive to design a study that is more likely to give the desired results. Research is subject to interpretation and statistics can be manipulated. Who is doing the interpreting? Get the raw facts and figures.

### **Be aware of advertising gimmicks.**

Consumers need to be sophisticated not to be fooled by claims made by clever advertisers. A red flag should go up when something is being sold by appealing to your emotions rather than extolling the product's own merits.

Keep in mind that the less nutritious a food product is, the more money is spent on advertising it.

### **Listen and watch for the disclaimers.**

Those quick disclaimer phrases on the ads are there by law: "Part of this nutritious breakfast" must be added to commercials for cereals that do not provide much nutritional value. Labels on products are not supposed to make any health claims without Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval. However...

Don't rely on the FDA to be a "watchdog" organization in every case. The FDA admits to being extremely overloaded. They act on the weight of the evidence for or against allowing products to stay on the "generally regarded as safe" (GRAS) list. They also react to pressure from the food industry, which speaks much louder than consumer groups.

### **Don't rely on government agencies in general to keep industry working in the public's interest.**

The current administration's policy to "get the government off the back of industry" weakens the authority of the agencies whose job it is to protect consumers.

It's your body. Take charge...develop a healthy skepticism and learn what is best for you. Don't rely on "experts". Listen to your own body...*you* are the most important part of keeping you healthy!

## Helping , from page 1

proves when they are removed; deny hyperactivity exists; manipulate the results of studies; acknowledge that additives can affect children, but claim the numbers are tiny; describe behavior and learning problems as a disease or disorder caused by some defect in the child, not a condition triggered by exposure to certain additives.

## Industry "Front" Groups

One of the most effective ways industries can influence public policy is the subject of a new book, *Masks of Deception: Corporate Front Groups in America*, by Mark Megalli and Andy Friedman. The book, priced at \$30, is available through Public Citizen, a genuine consumer group. To obtain a copy write to: Essential Information, Box 19405, Washington, DC 20036.

At one time, Megalli and Friedman point out, industry lobbies had straightforward names such as the Sugar Association or the Petroleum Institute. The public or the press could judge information coming from such offices with the understanding of their bias. There was little chance such a group could be confused with a consumer organization. (One notable exception was the Nutrition Foundation, established in the 1940's. It is a lobby for the major food, chemical and pharmaceutical companies. This is the group which was initially most instrumental in opposing Dr. Feingold.)

By the late 1960's industry lobbies saw how successful consumer groups were, and began to imitate them by selecting names that would obscure their corporate connections. The book notes, "Often, a scientific-sounding name is the most effective tool for peddling an industry position on an issue. This method is employed by many of the chemical and nuclear power companies. Examples include the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology, the American Council on Science and Health, and the Information Council on the Environment. Contrary to their names, these groups often disregard compelling scientific evidence to further their viewpoints, arguing that pesticides are not harmful, saccharin is not carcinogenic, or that global warming is a myth. By sounding scientific, they seek to manipulate the public's trust."

Some examples of corporate front organizations, as described in the book, are shown in the following list.

Name of organization	major supporters
"Foodwatch"	manufacturers of chemical fertilizer
"National Wetlands Coalition"	natural gas and oil companies
"Council for Solid Waste Solutions"	manufacturers of plastic containers
"Keep America Beautiful, Inc."	companies which use cans, bottles, and packaging materials
"Living Lakes"	power and coal companies most responsible for creating acid rain
"Consumer Alert"	various industries, including those which manufacture cigarettes, petro-chemicals, perfumes, pharmaceuticals, beer, as well as a company which manufactures aerosol spray mechanisms. The organization was chaired by John Sununu, formerly Chief of Staff to President Bush.
"Health Education Foundation"	alcoholic beverages
"Calorie Control Council"	manufacturers of synthetic sweeteners and foods which use them
"Information Council on the Environment"	coal companies
"National Legal Center for the Public Interest"	major American corporations seeking to take legal action to oppose environmental protection laws that would be contrary to their interests
"Citizens Against Government Waste"	major American companies
"United States Council for Energy Awareness"	utility companies promoting nuclear energy
"Safe Buildings Alliance"	asbestos-producing industries
"People for the West!"	mining companies
"Consumers for World Trade"	U.S. corporations seeking to weaken food safety and environmental laws so they can import and sell food from countries with lower safety standards

The organization best known to the Feingold Association is the **American Council on Science and Health**, a spin-off from the Nutrition Foundation. The first public act of the organization was a press release stating that the Feingold diet had no validity.

Ralph Nader called the organization "a consumer front organization for its business backers".

Megalli and Friedman write, "In the face of constant criticism concerning her group's assumed biases, [executive director, Elizabeth] Whelan justifies her findings by referring to her panel of 200 "scientists and other experts", 20 to 100 of whom review every position

paper ACSH publishes. But Peter Harnik, in his report on ACSH...says the list of experts is "designed to look impressive to the casual observer....[but] a close look at it reveals a pro-industry bias to warm the heart of a junk food salesman" According to Harnik, the scientists are mostly consultants, paid representatives or employees of corporations in the food, drug and chemical industries."

*Masks of Deception* lists the three largest contributors to ACSH as: Anheuser-Busch Foundation, Dow Chemical Corporation, and CIBA-GEIGY Corp. (the manufacturer of Ritalin).

## ...And Some Good News

Despite the difficulties we have encountered with industry front groups, the Association is not at war with food companies. Far from it.

Actually, most of the companies and individuals contacted have gone out of their way to help us locate the information we need.

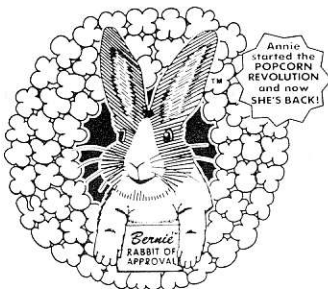
The Product Information Committee reports a major increase in the responses they are receiving from companies. Some, whose products are manufactured by several different companies, have written to these companies, shared our information and insisted that the suppliers respond to us because they want their products to be included in Feingold Foodlists. Many companies have voluntarily submitted Product Inquiry forms for their entire line, even though we only asked about one product. One company was in the process of revising their product line when they received our request for information, and asked if they could hold the forms until the revisions were complete because they wanted to consider our sensitivities.

Food companies are taking a closer look at our needs, and some are revising their products.

This interest has not been limited to small companies. Many of the larger companies are responding too. PIC researcher, Debbie Jackson, reports that many companies take great care in filling out our forms, often writing in comments to make sure we understand the information they're providing. Some companies take 2 or 3 months to respond to us because they took the time to contact the suppliers of the ingredients they use and had to wait for the response before they could answer our questions.

The type of food FAUS was requesting ten years ago is now becoming available. By examining our eating styles, we believe a company can gather valuable data on the foods which will be popular in the near future. We gladly provide assistance to any company which wants to explore more natural alternatives, and some which have contacted us are major corporations.

Every company is a balance of profit and service; some lean further in one direction than the other. A well known example of a company with a conscience is Ben and Jerry's, where all employees share in the decisions of the corporation and the firm believes in participating as a responsible member of its Vermont community. Another is Newman's Own, where profits are used for philanthropic work.



### Bunny Power

A less well-known example is a Hampton, CT company located in a rural farmhouse — Annie's. It was founded by Annie Withey and her husband, Andrew Martin, along with their pet/mascot, Bernie the bunny.

Annie is the originator of Smartfood — the popcorn & cheddar cheese snack in the black bag. This product is now owned by Frito-Lay. Withey and Martin later developed a revised version of popcorn dusted with cheddar cheese, and market it under the name Annie's. It is in a green bag, with Bernie's smiling face on the front. When Withey and Martin established their own company, they introduced their own rules, which are unique in a business enterprise. One of the most revolutionary is that all employees receive nearly the same salary.

A portion of the income from their products is used to support various causes, including an area 4H Youth Camp where "city kids" can enjoy a taste of nature. In a creative approach to helping homeless people, Annie's gives out plastic bags for families to fill with cans and bottles. Homeless people pick them up and take them to recycling centers in exchange for cash.

Check the PIC report for details on newly approved Annie's products.

## Making Your Voice Heard

Food companies love 800 numbers; they really do want you to call.



These phone calls provide companies with a wealth of information about their customers' lifestyles and preferences. They are far more reliable — and less expensive — than traditional methods of gathering information. Your phone call will play a part in all of the decisions a food company makes, including the development of new products and revised recipes for current ones.

Critics point out that one's privacy may be compromised since many company phones have caller identification. Occasionally a company will contact a caller to provide information about a new product. Some point out the potential that a company can sell your name for inclusion on a mailing list (but most of us are already on hundreds of these).

The sheer volume of calls received by food companies should reassure the reluctant caller. Pillsbury receives about 2,000 calls a day; Coca Cola gets between 1,500 and 2,200 daily; General Foods logs around a million calls in a year.

Callers dial 800 with many purposes in mind. Some complain, while others offer compliments. Gerber reports that new mothers often ask for advice on caring for baby, and they make every effort to be of help.

Many packages have the 800 number listed. You can also call 1-800-555-1212 to reach the 800 information operator and learn if a particular company has a toll-free number. You are not charged for that call.

For the Feingold member who wants a simple way to make her wishes and needs known, the 800 number is a valuable way to influence the decisions that will eventually appear in her supermarket. Don't hesitate to say that your family is on the Feingold Program. When you describe what the program is, don't be surprised if the operator has a child with learning/behavior problems, or if she suffers from headaches, chronic hives, etc. That's the time to give her OUR toll-free number (1-800-321-FAUS).

Feingold volunteers *never* rest!

## PIC Report

### from the FAUS Product Information Committee

The following have been researched and may be added to your Foodlist:

#### Non-Salicylate

ANNIE'S Popcorn & Cheddar Cheese. *Pasta mixes*: Alfredo w/Garlic & Garden Basil; Shells & Cheddar; Whole Wheat Shells & Cheddar ( currently available in health food stores and some supermarkets in New England, NY, VA, IA, MN, OH, CA).

DELICIOUS Hearty Wheat Snack Crackers, Snackers Crackers (CS), (*Sulfite-sensitive members: the crackers contain sulfites*).

LAND 'O LAKES Frosted Butter Cookies. (Manufactured by the Delicious Cookie Company, Des Plaines, IL)

MINI MILK All Natural Ice Milk Pops. (Good Humor Ice Cream Co.)

## Product Alert!

### Some bad news from McDonald's

The McDonald Corporation has confirmed what a few Feingold families have suspected: the vegetable oil now being used to fry their hash browns, fries, Mc-Chicken sandwich, Fillet-O-Fish, and Chicken McNuggets contains a synthetic preservative (TBHQ). As far as we know, the other items listed in our fast food pamphlet have not changed.

In recent years, the world's largest fast food chain has been very responsive to pressure from the public. The issues which have captured the headlines have centered around meats, fats & oils, and disposable wrappings. Unfortunately, the change in oil brought the current version. There is no well-funded pressure group asking them to remove petroleum-based additives. In fact, few people, including the staff at McDonald's headquarters office, were even aware of the TBHQ, (or that it can cause so many problems). It took a considerable amount of research for them to obtain this information for us, and *Pure Facts* is grateful for the courteous and helpful response we recieved.

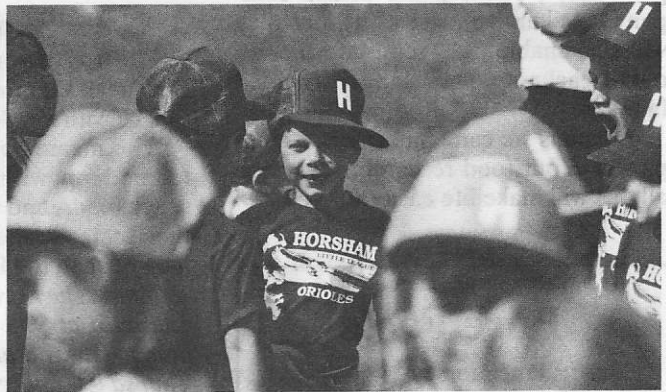
If you are disappointed about the addition of TBHQ, why not speak out? You can write to: Gretchen Coffman, Customer Relations, McDonald's, 1 Kroc Drive, Oak Brook, IL 60521 or call (708) 575-6198. It's time for some McActivism!

### Say it isn't so!

The Dannon Company, which has long prided itself in providing natural foods, has succumbed to temptation and now offers a product called "Sprinklins." According to a company spokesman, the "fruit flavored rainbow sprinkles" are artificially colored and flavored.

## David's Story – from angry child to "Bobcat"

He used to go up to total strangers, and say "I'm angry at you!"



David's "before" and "after" pictures speak for themselves.

He was not only angry, Lisa Burns recalls, but her son's behavior was wild, and often dangerous. Even their relatives didn't want to deal with him. What compels a child to head-banging and crib-rocking; what makes him unable to accept the love he is offered? Nothing made sense until his chemical sensitivity was discovered.

David's is one of the dramatic, fast responses to our Program. After three days, Lisa began to see changes. The anger and defensiveness left, and David began smiling. At the start of the Program he was extremely sensitive to even tiny amounts of salicylate, but now he can eat most of them in moderation.

Corn allergies and corn syrup sensitivity are a limitation, and David's reaction to MSG is pronounced. He becomes weepy, sad, dazed, cries easily and is very angry; this lasts for seven days! A recent episode came from the MSG hidden in tuna. Lisa had also suspected Chicken McNuggets as the source of another reaction. (See above.)

Today, David has lots to smile about. Beside feeling good, he won a first place medal in the Cub Scout derby race, earned his Bobcat badge, and won a bicycle rodeo. Another happy part of 7 1/2 year old David's life is his Feingold pen pal, Dustin, who lives in Corpus Christi, TX.

The Feingold® Associations do not endorse, approve or assume responsibility for any product, brand, method or treatment. The presence (or absence) of a product on a Feingold foodlist, or the discussion of a method or treatment does not constitute approval (or disapproval). The foodlists are based primarily upon information supplied by manufacturers, and are not based upon independent testing.

## FAUS Members Lend a Hand

Thanks to Feingold Mom, Rhonda Blackburn, the Hewlett Packard Company has designated the Feingold Association as the recipient of a \$1,000 donation from a fund used to support non-profit organizations. Rhonda is a member of HP's Donations Committee, and proposed the Association as a recipient.

### How about your company?

If you are employed by a company whose business does not create a conflict of interest with the Feingold Association, you may be able to assist us in obtaining some much needed funding. Please contact the FAUS office if you are interested in helping.

## Do You Contribute to the United Way?

Some United Way chapters allow members to designate their donation go to charities which are not listed. In this way, Feingold families have been able to help us fund our work. As a tax-exempt, non-profit organization, we meet the qualifications for such donations. Please contact FAUS at (703) 768-3287 if you want assistance or have questions.

## Young Wisdom

"These companies that put dye in the foods pollute the children's bodies."

*David L., age 7*

## Thank You!

Donations have begun to arrive for our School Year Calendar. Not only will they help us pay the bills (the postmaster, printer, and phone company lay claim to most of it), but they will also enable us to send information out to teachers, doctors, and to troubled families.

It means we can contact more companies in our food research. We hope all this will make life easier for you!

## Pure Facts

Editor: Jane Hersey  
Contributing Editors  
Fort Worth: Carolyn Allen  
Iowa: Barbara Keele  
Los Angeles: Colleen Smethers  
New York: Pat Palmer  
Ontario: Lois Gowans  
San Francisco: Lynn Murphy

*Pure Facts* is published ten times a year and is a portion of the material provided with membership in the Feingold Association.

For complete information contact FAUS, P.O. Box 6550, Alexandria, VA 22306. Phone (703) 768-FAUS.



## Le Supermarket

Don't be surprised if your visit to a European supermarket brings you face to face with familiar American cereals.

The mammoth General Mills has teamed up with PepsiCo to export snack foods, and with Nestle to market their cereals abroad. (Kellogg's has long been in the European market.)

*Note: The European cereal market is estimated at \$3.5 billion and the snack market is worth an annual \$17 billion. That's a lotta flakes & chips!*

## Cheerios

Unlike our experience with many other companies, it has been difficult for the Feingold Association to obtain product information from General Mills, the manufacturer of Cheerios. This is one reason the cereal does not appear on Feingold Foodlists.

To make it more confusing, Cheerios appears to be well tolerated in parts of the West, but not in the rest of the country. FAUS has tried to learn how processing differs from one manufacturing facility to the next, but we have not been able to receive answers to our questions.

## "Fundraising Couldn't Be Easier..."

The flyer received by the Feingold Association describes how our organization can bring in CASH by collecting wrappers. ("Have everyone start collecting these wrappers now, and they will become cash for your organization.") We would receive 5 cents for each wrapper sent in, and can learn more about the campaign by calling the toll-free Wrapper Hotline.

It sounds like a great idea, except the wrappers have to be for the products manufactured by M&M/Mars. None of the candies or snack products are acceptable for use by Feingold members.

How'd we get on *their* mailing list?

## Mailbag

"Please send me a copy of the permissible foods for the Phoenix, Arizona region.

"Thanks to this diet my little boy now sits quietly at school and can concentrate on his work for very long periods of time — 45 minutes to 1 1/2 hours per subject — and is able to interact and play nicely with other children."

*K. G. Phoenix, AZ*

"Please send me information about the Feingold diet. I have a 5 year old son who listens when he wants to, is very active and gets extremely "pouty" with his Kindergarten teacher.

"She mentioned Ritalin to me, I do not believe he needs to be drugged.

"Thank you."

*J. B., China Grove, NC*

"Dear FAUS,

"Please send me a list of pure products for my region (or as close as possible).

"My 6 year old is already responding and this is only day #2!"

*K. K., Memphis, TN*

## Product Alert!

**Thomas' English Muffins** — both Sourdough and Original now have BHA/BHT/TBHQ in the shortening. (This information is not shown on the ingredient label.) Please remove these from your Foodlist.