

## EPA Alumni-Chuck Elkins

**From:** EPA Alumni Association [epaalumni@aol.com]  
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**Subject:** EPA Alumni Association Newsletter



# EPA Alumni Association News

September 2010 Issue: 2



**Dear Web,**

Over 70 members set us ideas for the 40th Anniversary of EPA, and we want you to know what they said and how their ideas are being used! You'll find out in this latest Newsletter.

As you know, last month I sent you all a quick turnaround email asking for help in preparing for the Board's meeting with EPA about the 40th Anniversary. Members shared a wealth of good ideas for conference topics, and proposed new areas of activity for the Association. Some of you shared concerns about morale at EPA and the Agency's standing with the public. [You can read all of the comments here together with a summary \(but with authors' names deleted\)](#). We are following up with EPA on several of your ideas -- as described in the articles below.

I particularly want to address here the suggestion of several members that the Association publicly weigh-in on specific environmental problems or policies, particularly climate change. Of course many of us have strong feelings about current environmental issues and want to find ways to express our views and affect policy.

It is entirely appropriate and fairly easy for a member to express a position or concern on the Association's website, ask others to comment, or form a "group" for those with similar views (say The Endocrine Disruptor Squad, or Climate Action Group). So long as members don't represent to outside parties that their opinion on an issue is the **opinion of the Association (THAT requires Board approval)**, this kind of interaction among alums is healthy. Our website can be a useful tool for further dialogue. The more expressions of views the better! [Check out the "Opinions" section of our website](#) as a place you can have these discussions.

We are really excited about our members' desire to continue to make

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Active Alumni Groups in  
North Carolina and  
California



*Some of the 20+ EPA Alums in the Research Triangle Park area who met at Guglhupf Bakery and Cafe in Durham in July are shown above. The*

a difference. We discuss some of the possible ways in the articles below!

Chuck Elkins, Executive Director

## Board Meets With EPA

Your Board of Directors met on August 24 with about a dozen mid-level EPA staff to explore areas of potential collaboration and mutual support between the Association and the Agency. EPA staff were very interested in the possibility of Alums serving as mentors for employees, in recognition of the fact that the number of employees with long experience at the Agency is shrinking. We will be developing a MoU and program description for this effort for EPA's consideration. (See below)



We learned that the Agency is already well along in planning a "40th" conference with Harvard University for December, and hopes to make December 2010-December 2011 a year-long reflection on our founding, the progress EPA has made and challenges ahead. The Agency has created [a special webpage](#), to highlight the Anniversary and is working on a media blitz to mark the milestone as well. The Agency is still finalizing its 40th Anniversary plans and has promised to get back to us shortly to discuss possible opportunities for cooperation.

## Alums Giving Back

Many alums have continued their interest in environmental matters in their post-EPA lives. Some left EPA to join other entities with an environmental mission or the environmental departments within companies or organizations with broader missions. Quite a few practice environmental law or are consultants on environmental issues. Many are volunteers for groups working at the local level, or are teachers, mentors or guides working with young people. Some have been involved with academic or professional associations in their fields of specialty.



A number of you have told us that these efforts are very rewarding and have expressed interest in working with EPA and its employees to share your experience, skills, and wisdom with the Agency, such as through FACA committees, or with its workforce, as mentors and coaches for new employees or those in various developmental programs. Other ideas included forming a speakers bureau or alternatively speaking at retirement training sessions about "Life After EPA."

At our recent meetings with EPA we discussed these ideas and our ability to contribute. We told them that among our 580 members we have almost 8000 years of service at EPA to draw upon, not to mention our years outside of EPA! Several Agency representatives

*Group's next event, later this month, will be a tour of the newly renovated North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh. Lunch, following the tour, will be at the North Carolina State University Club. EPA also provides meeting rooms and occasional program updates for the RTP Group. "The Association has been very helpful in locating folks to invite to these low key gatherings. The new interactive map on the Association website should be of further assistance." Says John O'Connor.*

*An active group of nearly 70 alumni residing in California meets informally from time to time. All alums from Region IX are invited to the Region's annual picnic. Hiking groups of Region IX alums exist and are expanding in both the North Bay and East*

were very interested and suggested that we work up some proposals and also draft a Memorandum of Understanding that would address the necessary legal issues, conflicts of interest, etc. We have also made contact with the EPA Emerging Leaders -- an organization established and run by recent arrivals in the Agency who are interested in career development.

A Board Committee will be working on this and **would welcome your suggestions** if you haven't already provided them in response to the August email request, and **if you would like to be kept informed as we develop all these ideas with EPA**, email us about that too. You can reach the Committee **by sending an email to [NextGenerations@EPAalumni.org](mailto:NextGenerations@EPAalumni.org)**

## History stories

One of the ideas we mentioned to Bob Perciasepe at our meeting with him in this Spring was that Association members might be willing to record stories about the successes and setbacks that many of us were directly involved in. And the time to work on that is now, before memories become hazier. At our recent meeting, EPA staff expressed some interest in capturing this type of recollections for the 40th Anniversary of EPA as well as for helping to orient employees new to the Agency.

If you have stories you think might be interesting, especially those from which new leaders could learn how we faced and dealt with problems (and maybe even solved some of them!), please submit them to us by email or U.S. mail. There's no prescribed style or format.

We will keep in touch with EPA staff as they develop their ideas for these kinds of histories, but regardless of what happens with their efforts, we will compile your stories and post them on the Association's password-protected web site. In addition, we will probably want to present a copy to the Administrator or Deputy Administrator or make a copy available for the orientation of new employees, but if we decide to do this, we would give you a chance to edit your story or exclude it if you wish.

If you have an idea for a story, but aren't sure, Bob Wayland would be happy to "consult" with you. **Just email him.**

**Let's capture these memories and share them while we can with those who can enjoy and benefit from them.**

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*Bay, usually scheduling hikes every month or two. And, a tennis group consisting 5 alums have weekly tennis outings in the East Bay.*

*The new California Group webpage on the Association's site posts upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and relevant current environmental news. It has a separate page for our 12-15 members who are located in Southern California.*

*Shown below are several members and spouses who recently toured several National parks together. "Its great to be able to connect with our far flung colleagues on the web and by email, but it's really special to be able to get together in person from time to time." according to Dave Calkins.*



**New Web Feature!**

[Our Website now has an interactive Map showing the location of all our members. Check it out!](#)



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All Donors to the Association are Listed [Here](#).

[Click here to donate now](#)



Newest Members (May through August)

If you know of alumni who may not have joined us



~~~~~  
Membership in the Association is Free, But it Costs \$ to Operate. Your Contribution Will Help Us Follow Up on Ideas Described in This Newsletter.

[Click Here to Donate Now.](#)

Thank You

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**Help Write The Next Newsletter!**



In our next issue we will feature an interview with former Administrator Lee Thomas. Are there particular topics you would like him to address or questions you want us to ask? [Click here to let us know.](#)

We will also provide an update on 40th Anniversary plans and activities.

If you have story ideas, please share them with

yet, please forward this newsletter to them and urge them to join. Spread the word!

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us!

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Among the many items on EPA's website page for the 40th Anniversary is a time line of events during the past 40 years. Take a look and add your "I was there" comments to the specific events!

*Click here*

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### Clean Air Act 40th

Watch the [Newsletter](#) page on the Website ([www.EPAalumni.org](http://www.EPAalumni.org)) for a report (with photos) of EPA's September 14th Conference on the 40th Anniversary of the Clean Air Act.

*Susan and Bob Wayland*, Newsletter Editors  
EPA Alumni Association

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