

Nader Addresses NYPIRG in Albany Broad Range of Issues Discussed

by Steve Osman

The students gathered from as far away as Canada to embrace a wide range of issues. Many spent the evening in the gymnasium, some were put up for the night on campus, still others ventured to the outskirts of town for no-frills accommodations off-campus. The setting was the New York Public Interest Research Group's (NYPIRG) overnight 1981 Spring Conference, held at SUNY Albany Feb. 21 and 22. A common

thread of concern brought a contingent of Stony Brook students to join about 700 others in taking the opportunity to experience new things, expand their horizons, and appreciate the importance of being able to promote constructive change.

James Leotta, project coordinator for NYPIRG at Stony Brook noted that, "NYPIRG has given increasing numbers of students the tools they need to deal effectively with social issues while

expanding their educational horizons."

The conference brought into focus issues ranging from political corruption, consumer protection, safe energy and fiscal responsibility, to environmental ruination and social justice. NYPIRG's staff of lawyers, researchers, scientists, organizers and students developed the framework within which the Spring Conference was conducted.

Students broke up into small groups, and workshops were conducted on a variety of issues. Among these was investigative reporting, led by James Ridgeway of the Village Voice and E.J. Dionne of The New York Times. There were 48 workshops in all.

The keynote speaker of the event was Ralph Nader, a man who has devoted a great deal of time and energy to protect the environment and to helping students and consumers. Nader emphasized the role NYPIRG



A well received Ralph Nader

played in informing the public and warned against becoming apathetic and giving up the fight for social justice. He urged people not to simply say "oh what's the use," and warned against "dropping out of democracy." He explained that patriotism doesn't simply mean waving a flag and using slogans, but should be used to expose and correct the abuses of our system as well as for valuing its strengths. Said Nader, the rights to vote and of dissent do not exist in many places and should be treasured and used to build and plan for a better

future.

Nader founded NYPIRG in 1972, and has watched it become one of the largest and most effective student organizations in the country. It has a full time paid staff to coordinate overall activity, develop student creative strength and lend expertise and continuity to the organization. Said Donald Ross, executive director of NYPIRG, the schools have emphasized academic theory and largely ignored action and practical skills.

NYPIRG offers that opportunity for the practical application of knowledge.



Harry Chapin addresses NYPIRG Conference

Meditation Enhancing Creativity

by Marie Perez

Stony Brook students often complain that there are not enough extracurricular activities on campus. Well, for those who believe this is true, you are informed that there are clubs as well as other activities to be taken advantage of; clubs you possibly never knew existed. One such club is the Stony Brook Meditation Group, taught by Suzanne Boring and Jim Gennaro. Boring and Gennaro founded the club seven years ago. They have been involved in meditation for some time. Through the efforts and dedication of people such as Gennaro and Boring, the club has never ceased to be at the disposal of Stony Brook students. The course is offered on campus (Stony Brook Union) Monday at 7:30 PM and at Port Jefferson Thursday at 7:30 PM and is free of charge.

Often misconceptions arise from ignorance, in this case, many who have never experienced the art of meditation consider it to be some sort of unnatural and mystical experience. After attending the seminar one realizes this is not so. Rather, consider it as a way to find oneself through a very unique process.

Lights, incense and meditative music all

lend themselves well to the purpose of creating a pleasant and tranquil atmosphere. In this particular instance, a lit candle accompanied by a delicate pink rose were used to focus one's concentration. The students and members were told to focus their full attention on the brightest part of the flame, while sitting in an upright position so that the energies may flow freely. Next, the group was instructed to focus its attention on the heart center, this being the most effective energy center in our bodies for the purpose of meditation. Boring asked to imagine a lit flame within our heart center and then proceed to allow our thoughts to flow freely. After doing so, what is referred to as a mantra, was chanted. The mantra is a chant which involves a certain consciousness necessary for the task at hand. It is often referred to as the "un-sound sound." The chants made most use of are "Aum" and "Srimg." Each was repeated seven times in unison by all.

Following these exercises, there was a slide presentation of paintings by Sri Chinmoy, done while in a high state of consciousness. The slides were powerful, colorful and expressive of each distinct plane the painter had reached while in this meditative frame of

mind. Each painting was done in record time (thus meditation can accelerate our mental processes) and those who observed the works were able to identify with at least one of them as well as the level of consciousness that each one was created in. Meditation and creativity combine serving as an extension, a way to reach into a higher plane and bring down something new and fresh, something waiting to be born. Another example of incorporating the mastery of meditation with skills and creativity is the upcoming jazz concert with Russell Tubbs which will be performed in the Stony Brook Union auditorium, tomorrow at 7:30 PM. This is a unique opportunity to see how meditation can aid in the stimulation of our creative senses — an opportunity that should not pass us by.

For the most part, meditation can be applied to each and every aspect of life be it for creative purposes or simply just to slow down the pace of a hectic and frustrating day in which we have forgotten ourselves. As human beings we are gifted with insatiable resources within that, perhaps, need be discovered through the art of meditation. Doors open and we learn to grow with meditation as a pinnacle of psychic consciousness — the closest thing to our souls.