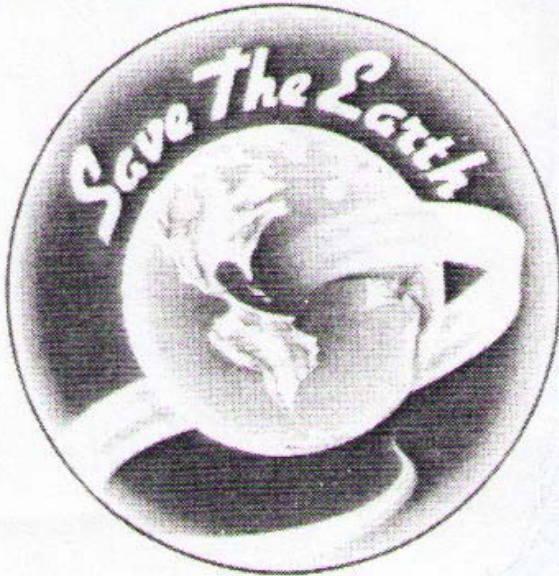


# VIEW

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## A Lonely Mission Finally Bears Fruit

Conversion hardly seems imminent, but if Neal Pargman had his way, Californians would scrub "Have a nice day" and sign off with "Save the Earth!" Whatever, Pargman can wait. He's used to it.

It's been 17 years since Pargman—currently of Woodland Hills—started the Save the Earth Foundation on crossed fingers and a frayed shoestring. "A time warp" he calls the interval between ecology-minded hippies gone Yup and today's increasing awareness of our planet's fragility.

For 17 years, Pargman has

scrounged, mooched, hitchhiked, slept on beaches—and never faltered in his lonely mission.

Last year, the foundation finally bore fruit, to the point of awarding a grant to UC Davis. Next week, Pargman will present another grant, to Duke University. Small grants to be sure—\$3,000 each—but representing virtually everything Pargman has taken in to date.

He is licensing his logo now—clothing, toys, accessories—and the cast of "The Young and the Restless" has earned \$7,000 for the cause from a celebrity quiz show. The movement is on a modest roll now and you'll be hearing more about Pargman—somewhat astounding considering that he was nearly snuffed before he started.

Shortly after he began his one-man crusade, Pargman, in heavy gear, was fishing off a rock promontory in Santa Cruz. A huge wave washed him out to sea. The clothing held him down. "I was underwater, off and on, for 20 minutes," he recalls. "I was going to die. I kept saying, 'Oh God, I'm not ready to go yet. There's something I have to do.'" At that point, another giant wave lifted him and deposited him back on the rocks.

Back on terra firma, Pargman admits that "wearing a logo won't save the Earth, but it'll get the message into your head." Isn't it too late? "Well, it doesn't look real good. It'll take a miracle. But I've seen miracles before."

First-hand.

—DICK RORABAUGH