



eco-logue

*"Not blind opposition
to progress, but opposition
to blind progress."*

ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP

Volume 30, No. 3
May/June 2000

Thursday, May 18, 7:15 PM at Third Presbyterian Church
SAVING OUR THREATENED WETLANDS

"Why would anyone want to save a swamp?" you may ask. "They're such yucky, sticky places, not fit for people - not even me - and I like the out-of-doors." If these thoughts lurk in the deep recesses of your brain - and you, an avowed environmentalist - well then.....

Come, see, hear and learn how wetlands work as a valuable unique system and why we should preserve them to do what they do best. Representatives from the League of Women Voters will be with us to present their three-dimensional wetland model as well as a video.

Come learn how some groups including the Sierra Club's own Wetlands Committee work to preserve the wetlands in our area.

Don't like meetings? You would rather get out into the natural world of wetlands? Well, come to this one meeting and learn how you can participate as a member of the Sierra Club in a new EPA funded project to "Adopt a Wetland" - by getting out there and identifying what plants



and animals (other than us humans) are making use of the wetlands as their home. Why? To preserve these priceless areas which are continually under the threat of extinction by short sighted development.

This program is suitable for both children and adults.

Third Presbyterian Church is at the corner of East Avenue and Meigs

WILDERNESS BEGINS IN THE HUMAN MIND

A Sierra Club position statement

This is not about getting back to nature. It is about understanding we never left. We are deep in our nature every day. We're up to our ears in it. It's under our feet, its in our lungs, it runs through our veins. We are not visitors here. We weren't set down to enjoy the view. We were born here and we're part of it - like any ant, fish, rock or blade of grass.

This connection is as personal as it is fundamental. It can't be proved with theorems and diagrams. You either feel it or you don't. Maybe it came to you on a mountain trail, or on a riverbank, or a windowsill watching a spider's unthinking intelligence unfold. Simply put, it's the sudden conviction that there is something out there, something wonderful. And it is much, much bigger than you.

A revelation like this could easily overwhelm a person. We choose to let it inspire us. Nature, vastly complex and infinitely subtle, is our perfect metaphor. Related to everything, signifying everything, it is the spring where we go to renew our spirit. And it, in turn, asks something of us. It compels us to take responsibility and then to take action.

There is nothing inevitable about the future of our environment. A poisoned stream can get worse, stay the same, or get better. It depends largely on what we choose to do. That simple belief, backed by 100 years of effort and result, is what drives the Sierra Club. So forget the grim cliché of the selfless environmentalist. When you accept your connection to nature, suddenly you can't look at the world without seeing something very personal in it. You are part of it, and you work for the planet because it gives you joy to do so. You work for the planet because you belong to it.



FROM THE CHAIR


by Gilly Burlingham

FOR YEARS I dreamed of getting off the grid and having my own windmill here on Wellspring Farm in Wyoming County.

The wind was taken out of my sails when I found out the whole setup including storage batteries would cost more than the \$10,000 I anticipated. But now, for only \$10, I am a member of a new cooperative that will buy energy from renewable resources - solar, wind and small hydro. This chance to put our money where our environmental mouths are is open to you too, wherever you live.


Under the upcoming energy deregulation, you will be faced with choices, and you can use your choice to become part of the GREEN energy movement by sending a check made to Co-opPlus, at 400 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607. For their records, include your phone number, e-mail address if you have one, current utility provider, and note on your check that you are a member of the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club. We will receive \$2 for each person who joins through us, and as always we can use every penny. For questions you can call Gordon Dutter at the Co-opPlus office at 340-3317.

WEARING MY HAT  as Outreach Person for the Sierra Club, I went to Greece's Holy Name of Jesus church for their final Lenten Wednesday night simple soup supper last month. Deacon Lombard had called the Sierra Club because the parish people who gather annually for six evenings at this season, decided the theme this year would be "Becoming Green." I was delighted to suggest Co-Chair Hugh Mitchell to lead off followed by Judy Braiman of Rochesterians Against the Misuse of Pesticides (RAMP) and Alison Clark on Community Gardens. My presentation focused on being informed and thoughtful consumers: buying less stuff, using cheaper and safer cleaning products such as vinegar and baking soda, drinking water instead of carbonated beverages, and using the savings to invest in socially responsible mutual funds. I was enchanted with their form of face-to-face socializing-with-a-purpose and wonder if there are other churches or organizations who might plan a similar series of gatherings. I for one would welcome the opportunity to enlarge on the theme of getting away from consumerism and back to community. Let me know at 237-6378 if you know of such a group.

I TAKE MY HAT OFF,  way off, to my Co-Chair Hugh Mitchell for arranging our incredible Environmental Forum on April 6. A big thank you also to Hal Bauer who arranged for the use of the First Unitarian Church. Hal also organized the March meetings on responsible consumption and sustainable living.

Our Second Annual Environmental Forum was even more exciting than last year's. Some 28 or 29 groups were there, from the new "No Exit" (see page 3), through Smart

Growth, Common Ground Planning Center, and RAMP to People for Parks and Brighton Neighbors United. Each had displays and gave a two-minute description of their purpose and work. This wonderful exchange and display of environmental activism was inspiring and energizing. And the speech by Professor James Buchanan, "Rethinking the Environment In an Information Age," was so thought-provoking and enlightening. (See photos, page 3.)

FINALLY, WEARING MY HAT  as head of our Clean Air/Clean Water Committee, and as a Kodak Shareholder, I would invite anyone interested to join our informational picketing before the Kodak Annual Meeting on May 10th at 10 AM. You are warmly welcome. We will gather at 9 AM at the Theater on the Ridge, 200 Ridge Road West. For the third successive year I have submitted a shareholder resolution, this time on asking for additional environmental disclosure. The informal coalition I jokingly call the "Coalition to Help Kodak Be All it Can Be" is going to try to spend more time asking to work with, rather than attacking Kodak. Again, for more information, please call me (237-6378).

MIGRATORY BIRD EXTRAVAGANZA

May 6, 2000

Shawn Coffey has planned an outing to Island Cottage Woods (in Greece) on Saturday, May 6. This will be prime time and location for seeing small migratory birds such as warblers as they stop on their way north. A very experienced local bird watcher, Bob Beal, will lead us and help us to identify species we don't often see. We will meet at the site at 9:00 AM, and plan to spend all morning and part of the afternoon there. The trails are likely to be wet, so wear boots, and bring binoculars, water and a lunch. Call Shawn Coffey at 393-9064 for directions to our meeting place.

SIERRA CLUB TRAINING ACADEMY COMING

Mark your calendars now...JUNE 2-4, 2000
at Garnet Hill Lodge in North River, NY.

Join us to fine-tune your environmental organizing skills with other like-minded individuals in a beautiful Adirondack Wilderness Area. The fee is \$20 for the entire weekend - includes meals, lodging and training.

Whether you've been an environmental activist for many years or have just become interested in this worthwhile movement, you're guaranteed to walk away from this training with a feeling of empowerment and valuable skills that will aid you in your future work.

For more information, please contact the Sierra Club Northeast Regional Field Office at 518-587-9166 or e-mail: ne-ny.field@sierraclub.org.

Eco-logue is published bimonthly by the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club, Post Office Box 39516, Rochester, NY 14604-9516. Subscriptions are free to Sierra Club members living in the Rochester Region, and available at \$10 per year to others.

NO EXIT

You have probably heard about the proposed Thruway exit/interchange on Union Street in Chili. Some citizens who live in that area have formed a group called "No Exit" to actively oppose the proposal. They have put together a list of 20 reasons why the exit should not be built. For the sake of brevity, here are the top five:

1. In the last 30 years the population in Monroe County has remained virtually the same, yet we have nearly doubled our land use.
2. According to traffic studies recently conducted by the Genesee Transportation Council, there are neither current nor projected transportation needs that justify the expansion project.
3. The primary reason given for this project is to promote "economic development."
4. We should not be encouraging more land use for development, especially using taxpayer dollars, while there are millions of square feet of abandoned commercial and industrial space with infrastructure in place already available for "economic development" in Monroe County.
5. The area for the proposed exit is in the middle of a Farmland Protection District, and one of the last predominately rural and agricultural areas in Monroe County.

If you would like more information about the "No Exit" group, contact Michele Zuck 954 Quaker Rd., Scottsville

14546, phone 889-1064 days, or 889-5280 evenings. E-mail: michele@racingscene.com

CONTRIBUTIONS STILL NEEDED

You may recall a letter from the Atlantic Chapter asking for a contribution about a month ago. If you responded at that time, a portion of your gift will be forwarded to our local group, and we thank you very much. If you did not contribute then, or if you would like to help us even more, it's still possible. Our treasury balance is very minimal. We routinely need extra income beyond what the national club sends us just to publish the Eco-logue, for example. If you would like to help, simply make out your check to Sierra Club - Rochester Regional Group and send it to Sierra Club, Box 39516, Rochester, N.Y. 14604

If you want to make a tax-deductible contribution, you can do it in a way that will directly benefit the Rochester Regional Group. Stocks, bonds or cash given to the Sierra Club Foundation are tax deductible because they can only be used for carefully defined education programs such as informational meetings and newsletters. To earmark your gift for our group it should be clearly marked "For use by the Rochester Regional Group." Make out checks to The Sierra Club Foundation and send them to our local mail box: Sierra Club, Box 39516, Rochester, N.Y. 14604. If you wish to donate stocks, bonds, or other instruments please call Hugh Mitchell (716) 244-2625 for detailed procedures.

Scenes from the Environmental Forum, April 6, 2000



CALENDAR

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|--|----------------------------------|
| May 4 | Thursday | 7:00 PM | Clean Air/Clean Water Committee | 6 Sibley Pl. |
| May 6 | Saturday | 9:00 AM | ----- Migratory Birds Outing (see page 2) ----- | Island Cottage Woods*** |
| May 7 | Sunday | 1:30 PM | Population Committee | 6 Sibley Pl. |
| May 11 | Thursday | 7:15 PM | Ex-Com meeting* | St. John's Meadows** |
| May 18 | Thursday | 7:15 PM | ----- General Meeting (see page 1) ----- | Third Presbyterian Church |
| June 1 | Thursday | 7:00 PM | Clean Air/Clean Water Committee | 6 Sibley Pl. |
| June 4 | Sunday | 1:30 PM | ----- Population Committee ----- | 6 Sibley Pl. |
| June 8 | Thursday | 7:15 PM | Ex-Com Meeting* | St. John's Meadows** |
| June 15 | Thursday | 7:15 PM | ----- Wetlands Committee ----- | 150 Sunset Drive, Brighton |
| June 15 | Thursday | | Eco-logue deadline | |
| July 2 | Sunday | 7:00 PM | ----- Eco-logue Mailing ----- | 6 Sibley Pl. |

* Ex-Com meetings are open to members. Call Hugh Mitchell at 244-2625.

** Call Ginny Tyler, 244-4084 for directions (members invited)

***Call Shawn Coffey at 393-9064 for directions.

Visit our web site at www.sierraclub.org/chapters/ny/rochester

Also worth a visit: <http://rochesterenvironment.com>

To add your name to our e-mail list, send your address to: hmitch@frontiernet.net