



Fresh Air

Atlantic Chapter Mid-Hudson Group

Spring 2004

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Website: <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/midhudson>

From the Group Chair's Corner

by Bibi Sandstrom

C-C-Changes:

It's "revolution" time - or at least, revolving positions again! After a trying time of having no treasurer (thanks to JUDY BAUMANN for filling in for a great portion of 2003!), we now have former officer RALPH POLLARD becoming not only treasurer - but writing himself in as a board member, too! He's already been hard at work - thanks, Ralph! We let FRED SCHAEFFER step down as requested, although we hope to keep him active with his great summer picnic! We were panicked and sorry that superb webmaster PETER FORD up and moved to Tennessee, especially given his tremendous work on our website (<http://newyork.sierraclub.org/midhudson>) for 2 years - he's been a dream of a volunteer what with making requested changes within 24 hours each time - but CHARLES LAZIN just said yes to being Peter's successor! Thanks to all!

We do still need a Tag Sale chair [if you can coordinate volunteers and work on: probably Sept 18?, let us know immediately!], plus help from everything from another board member to fundraising to Post Office "newsletter-taker", as well as in many small ways too - **HELP!** (See our Volunteers Page on the website).

ANOTHER BIG CHANGE: we are moving our Speaker Socials. The Highland Cultural Center moved in November - in fact, our November Speaker Social was their last event! We did go out with a bang - we had 38 people there to see Rusty Johnson and his wild animals. We learned "do not smell like chicken when handling snakes" and "don't bother to run in a zigzag pattern from alligators" and had a GREAT time! A couple pictures from that night can be seen on our website, and Rusty's website is www.WildlifeLectures.com.

In 2004, we will continue to meet on Third Wednesdays in April, May, June, October, and November, but in Poughkeepsie at the Jewish Community Center! The executive director, David Friedmann, became a member not too long ago, and has graciously offered space there. So, we will meet at 110 Grand Avenue at 7:30pm starting in April! The JCC is close to downtown Poughkeepsie and to Vassar College, and is 5 blocks south of the East Bound arterial (44/55) on Grand Avenue.

"NEW" EVENT:

We're going to have another "New Members' Dessert/Snack Party" at the Village Hall in New Paltz. Please bring either a snack (cheese, potato chips) or dessert on **SATURDAY MARCH 27** on or after 7pm to the Village Hall on Plattekill Avenue in the village of New Paltz. All members are welcome - in fact, do be sure and come and welcome our new members! Anyone joining in the last 2 years - or for whom this is their first event - is "new"! (Did you get a welcome letter & questionnaire, or did we miss you?) Call me at 255-5528 or bibis@juno.com for info.

ANOTHER NEW EVENT: We'll be working with the Hudson Valley Humanists on having a march at 3pm and a rally at 4pm at SUNY-New Paltz on "Growing Population, Dwindling Wildlife" on **SATURDAY, APRIL 24**, for Earth Day. Contact me if you're interested in helping and/or coming.

Next newsletter, which has a deadline of May 1st, will have info on a June fundraiser - a documentary on human rights and the environment. Stay tuned!

-- Bibi Sandstrom

HELP! We realize March is when the state chapter sends out their fundraising letter, but we, *your local group*, badly need funds. Of the \$15-\$50 a year that you pay, in 2002 we got 80 cents back from the chapter, and this year we'll only get .48 in "real" money. We'd REALLY appreciate any donation you could send separately to POB 1012, Poughkeepsie, NY 12602 - **THANKS!!**

PROGRAM CORNER

LEARN TO BUILD THE SUN AND PROTECT THE WATER!

*Our Third Wednesday 730PM **Spring Speaker Socials** will have us learning to build solar panels and how to protect watersheds.

*On April 21, member **DAVID BURNS** will discuss the various principles involved in the watershed planning process utilizing various Hudson Valley examples. David coordinates watershed groups and conducts water research and education programs as part of his job as the Watershed Coordinator of the Dutchess County Environmental Management Council. Come see David's PowerPoint presentation at our brand-new location at 730pm at the Jewish Community Center in Poughkeepsie!

*On May 19, member **CHARLES LAZIN**, a consultant for alternative renewable energy, will not only discuss geothermal and solar energy, but will show us how to build solar panels on our own! Charles, of the Sustainable Hudson Valley: Green Building Group, managed installations recently at the Culinary; he'll show us "what we can do as individuals to reduce oil dependency and raise energy efficiency". In the meantime check out www.altren.net.

Contact bibis@juno.com for info, for speaker suggestions, if interested in being the new Program Chair in 2005, or if you'd like to be reminded of the events via email (our next newsletter won't be mailed 'til June).

CONSERVATION CORNER by Roberta Clements

Thanks to all who voted in the Atlantic Chapter elections. I am happy to be the At Large Delegate for the Mid-Hudson Group. Make sure to read your ballots and vote in the upcoming elections for the national Sierra Club. It is also of key importance for us all to educate ourselves for the upcoming presidential election. Remember your mantra "I'm the Sierra Club and I vote!"

Our big issue in Gardiner opposing the Awosting Reserve Development continues to fester. The developer, Chaffin-Light, continues to protest every decision made by the local government. The Gardiner Zoning Board of Appeals has closed public comment and may make a ruling at the February meeting. (The Awosting Reserve appealed the determination by the town code enforcer that a sewage treatment plant is not allowable on the ridge). Given the sensible and lawful finding by the code enforcer we hope the ZBA should uphold the ruling. If so perhaps the developers may come to their senses and realize the absurdity of their proposal.

The Kingston Landing proposal of an apartment and housing complex on the Hudson waterfront remains in the planning stages as the developer, AVR realty, continues to engage in open discussion with the city and the local community as to how to make the project a good fit for all. Let's hope it will!

If you live in the region around Boiceville you may have received our mailing regarding another huge proposal including not 1 but 2 golf courses and miles of hotel sprawl development. Several of our Executive Committee members were in attendance at the public hearings which received a huge turnout in protest, including legislators Maurice Hinchey and Kevin Cahill. Thanks to all Sierrans who heeded the call. This is the way we can keep the Hudson Valley safe, healthy, and beautiful. "Crossroads at Belleayre" would cover 2000 acres in Ulster and Delaware counties. The developer, repre-

sented by Dean Gitter, was accused of using tactics to impede the public from learning about the development (such as making a 1300 page Draft Environmental Impact Statement un-navigable on the Web). More importantly, the development would have major negative impacts on local watersheds as well as the New York City drinking water. A major point of discussion revolves around the rights of the property owner vs. the rights of the greater community. Private property was one of the founding ideals of this nation but do we now need to use a different set of lenses in the way we view our rights to ensure the long term stability of our ecosystems (not to mention economic stability)? It is surely something to consider.

Two of our local representatives on the Ulster County Legislature have drafted a proposal for updating Ulster County's Open Space Plan and recommend including protection of vital resources such as water quality, wetlands, and biologically diverse ecosystems.

Another point to consider in light of the variety of ongoing battles between the environment and developers would be the creation of a statewide Master Plan. As you may be aware, many towns are revising their Master Plans which describe an outline for the future development of all aspects of the town (economic, agricultural, aesthetic, housing, open space, etc). If New York State were to develop a Master Plan for the state this could avert many of the problems for developers as well as environmentalists in the same way that local master plans do for their towns. This would obviously require significant involvement from localities across the state but could a Statewide Master Plan be good for everybody?

DON'T FORGET THE 2ND ANNUAL HIKE-A-THON WITH A TENTATIVE DATE SET FOR JUNE OF THIS YEAR.

SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

Hiking, Biking and Canoeing: If you have a favorite outing you'd like to share with other Sierrans, please call Outings Director, Joanne Steele at (845) 339-7526.

TUESDAY MARCH 9, 7 PM, BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL, LAFAYETTE THEATRE, SUFFERN NY.

"Stunning international film productions on mountain themes. Best of the internationally acclaimed Festival that captures the spirit of the mountains with magnificent cinematography."

<http://www.chestnutmntnproductions.com/banff/jersey-home.htm>

SATURDAY APRIL 3. 3C GRAYMOOR MONASTERY NORTH. HIKING THE AT IN NEW YORK

Spotting a car at South Highland Road, we hike north 6.0 miles north from Graymoor. L. Joe Gardner (518) 439-8719 jgardnjr@nycap.rr.com Mohawk-Hudson Chapter AMC

WEDNESDAY APRIL 14 AND WEDNESDAY APRIL 28. BEGINNER'S PADDLE 1-3PM ON THE RONDOUT.

About 4 miles to there and back or about an hour of lazy paddling. We'll talk about our boats and paddles at the beginning. We will witness early spring flora and fauna and see the last lock of the Delaware & Hudson Canal en route. Bring your canoe or kayak. Register to participate at least two day's ahead. Rain dates, April 15 and 29, respectively. L. Joanne Steele 845-339-7526. (Sierra Club Mid-Hudson Group)

SATURDAY APRIL 17. 3C. HIKING THE AT IN MASSACHUSETTS.

October Mountain State Forest south of Pittsfield. Join us for a through hike after spotting a car, we hike a relatively level 7.3 miles from County Road at Bald Top north to Blotz Road. L. Joe Gardner (518) 439-8719 jgardnjr@nycap.rr.com Mohawk-Hudson Chapter AMC

SUNDAY APRIL 18 UPPER RAMAPO RIVER (TUXEDO TO HILLBURN, NY)

Fun and surprisingly scenic Class 1+ river. No canoe rentals available. Some minimal whitewater experience necessary. L. Gail Neffinger, 845-358-1134 (leave message), Sierra Club, Atlantic Chapter. email ggneff@earthlink.net

SUNDAY, MAY 2. 3C HARRIMAN STATE PARK. HIKING THE AT IN NEW YORK.

We hike 5.3 miles from Lake Tiorati to Arden Valley Road at the New York State Thruway. L. Joe Gardner (518) 439-8719 jgardnjr@nycap.rr.com Mohawk-Hudson Chapter

AMC

SUNDAY MAY 2 BIRDING AND BOATING ON THE LOWER RAMAPO RIVER (NJ)

Join us for ten miles of class 1 paddling from Mahwah to Oakland NJ. In addition to enjoying the paddling we will also be looking for avi-fauna of the area. (No boat rentals available locally.) L. Ira Grindlinger, 201-599-0099. Sierra Club, Atlantic Chapter. email wbupar@aol.com

WEDNESDAY MAY 5 AND WEDNESDAY MAY 19. FLATWATER PADDLE, 1:30-4:30PM.

On the Esopus, going about 7 miles to there and back or about 2 hours of lazy paddling. We'll see some local geology and what early spring looks like on this important local trout Creek. Bring your canoe or kayak. Register to participate at least two day's ahead. Rain date 3 May 6 and 20, respectively. L. Joanne Steele 845-339-7526. (Sierra Club Mid-Hudson Group)

SATURDAY MAY 15. 2C IRON BRIDGE AND FALLS VILLAGE. HIKING THE AT IN CONNECTICUT.

After spotting a car at Rt. 7 near Lime Rock, we hike 3.3 miles south from Great Falls, Iron Bridge and Falls Village. We may catch a 2.0 mile section at Rt. 4, Cornwell Bride south to River Road. L. Joe Gardner (518) 439-8719 jgardnjr@nycap.rr.com Mohawk-Hudson Chapter AMC

TUESDAY MAY 25. 3C. EAST MOUNTAIN STATE FOREST NEAR GREAT BARRINGTON.

Hiking the AT in Massachusetts. Join us for a downhill hike after spotting a car. We will hike 6.5 miles from Lake Bruel Road south to the Housatonic River. L. Joe Gardner (518) 439-8719 jgardnjr@nycap.rr.com wk-Hudson Chapter AMC

More hikes listed on page 4

HIKE RATING SYSTEM MID-HUDSON GROUP

Distance

1. up to 3 miles
2. 3 to 5 miles
3. 5 to 8 miles
4. 8 & up

Elevation Gain

- D. under 500 feet
- C. 500 to 1000
- B. 1000 to 2,000
- A. 2,000 & more

Gain classifications represent the sum of all gains (or losses if hike is a downhill one) in elevation per day.

FYI: 2004 ATLANTIC CHAPTER OUTINGS RIVER TRIPS are posted on the ACOC website at <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/outings/canoe.htm>

SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

SATURDAY, MARCH 27 CORNISH ESTATE HIKE B

Join us on a 5-6 mile loop and check out the ruins of an old estate and dairy farm. Come back by way of Undercliff with some nice views and past an old mine. Dress appropriately. Bring lunch and water. Joint outing with Mid-Hudson ADK

Meeting time/place: Call leaders for details.

Leaders: Sue Totten, Steve Soodik. **Tele:** (845) 744-3648

SATURDAY, MARCH 27 THOMPSON POND C-

Suitable for children

Walk around a 44 acre Glacial Lake, which is a designated national natural landmark. This circumneutral bog supports abundant wildlife. Great way to welcome spring. 2.4 miles. Joint outing with Mid-Hudson ADK

Meeting time/place: 10:00 a.m. Lake Road in Pine Plains. From TSP, NY199 E for 6.8 miles. Then .3 miles South on NY82, right onto Lake Road. Pull off into parking area for Thompson Pond.

Leader: Lalita Malik **Tele:** (845) 724-5786

MOVED? Receiving DUPLICATE COPIES of Fresh Air or having any other problems? Please contact National Sierra; they handle address changes, etc., and "trickle them down" to the local level. Thanks!

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"Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you."

-- Frank Lloyd Wright, architect