

Fresh Air



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Atlantic Chapter Mid-Hudson Group

Spring 2007 Vol.39 Issue #1

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

Chair's Corner

Bibi Sandstrom

From Woe to Wow to Whoo hoo!!!

We hail our Hudson Heroes who helped wonderfully at the end of the year: Mary Lunt, Moisha Blechman, the Bernsteins, and the Haases! Our gifted gift wrappers & donors were also generous at Sierra's Barnes & Noble Day (new record!), and even the chapter is going to increase the money they send us from 48 to 60 cents. However, since 60 cents is still not enough even for FA's postage costs, we'd still be grateful for any stamps or checks sent to Mid-Hudson Sierra Club, POB 1012, Poughkeepsie NY 12602.

Other Ways to Help:

Electronic Mailing:

Help us with postage savings by letting us know if you're willing to take the newsletter electronically. **Jim Mays** is setting that up (in fact, if you gave your email but still receive the *summer* newsletter via snail mail, let us know -bibis@juno.com. And check out our updated website at newyorksierraclub.org/midhudson. Courtesy of new webmaster **Kevin McKenzie!**

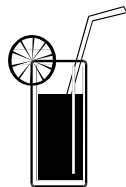
Discount:

Member **David Friedman** is offering a 10% donation to our Sierra Club, and a modest discount to the shopper, for orders through his website www.bibliotique.us for used or rare books! Use coupon code "MH-Sierra" at checkout. Catskill songwriter James Krueger has a brand-new CD out, and is repeating his earlier offer (see box)!

New Member Party - Sun May 20, 1-4pm

This year, we're holding our **New Member Party** at a member's place in Walker Valley where new and longtime members are invited to meet and **learn about baby bluebirds!**

Jennifer Gonzales has orchards, ponds, horses, pets, tents in case it rains, and bluebirds nesting! Take a short hike on a path to a pond on the property, or a hike before coming over at the Cragsmoor-Nature Conservancy or Ice Cave Mountain (Sam's Point) nearby. **Bring kids/family, a picnic lunch, and/or a snack to share.** She's on Rt. 52 between Ellenville and Pine Bush, but call 744-2938 during the week before the event for directions.



Special Earth Day Event

*How Many Sierrans Does
It Take to Change a
Lightbulb?*



When: Sunday, April 22 **Where:** Blockheads Mexican Restaurant at the corner of Plattekill and Main Street (former home of Ariel's Bookstore) in New Paltz. From 5pm to closing, Blockheads will donate 25% of the proceeds that evening to Mid-Hudson Sierra. **AND, the first 20 customers will receive a free compact fluorescent bulb thanks to John Maserjian of Central Hudson.** Come enjoy some Mexican food, help your local group, and receive an energy-efficient bulb if you're early!

Programs

March 23: Couch Potatoes!! See Outings March 23.

April 18: Photographic Technique. Kevin VanBuren of VanBuren Photography will come share his beautiful nature photographs and knowledge. Learn how to take great nature shots and view some of the Hudson Valley's gorgeous scenery through Kevin's lens.

May 16: "Covering the Valley Environment Beat". Dan Shapley, Environment Editor and New Media Editor for the Poughkeepsie Journal has twice earned the annual beat reporting award from the NYS Associated Press Association. He will talk about his job and the issues facing the Hudson Valley, and answer questions.

Program Location and Time:

Jewish Community Center, 32 N. Chestnut (32N), New Paltz, 730pm..

Labeling Party Tues May 29, 6-10pm: Help us label our summer newsletter; food & drink provided, some courtesy of **The Alternative Baker** of Kingston! 890 Route 82 (south, off the Taconic), at the East Fishkill Community Center, or contact our generous host **Debra Hall** for specific directions at Sierradutchess@optonline.net.

Spring Outings: See Ratings

Class A – Difficult: 1500' climb/more than 8 miles

Class B - Moderate: Less than 1500' climb 6-8 miles

Class C- Easy: well graded trails, less than 6 miles.

Outings Coordinator: Tonda Highley

Contact Tonda at highleyt@newpaltz.edu or at 255-9933 if you would like to lead an outing.



“ When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds attached to the rest of the world” John Muir

Sun., March 11; Level C, EAGLE WATCH - educational program for the family. 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Clermont State Park, Clermont, NY. On the Dutchess & Columbia County line. Take Rt 9G North, take a left on Rt. 6 and follow signs to the park. Meet at the parking lot near the comfort station. (No entry fee before April). Dress in layers, wear warm socks/shoes, hats, gloves. Binoculars or a viewing scope. Your patience and sense of wonder. Thermos with hot beverage to help keep you warm and smiling. Contact Clara at: cebui@yahoo.net to sign up and if you have any questions. Looking forward to seeing you! Inclement weather cancels.

Sun., March 18, James Baird State Park, Hike or X-Country Ski, 4-5 miles, Level C. The great thing about hiking James Baird in late winter is being able to traverse the golf course as well as the woods. Explore the pond areas set aside for Blandings Turtles; learn about the habitats this endangered species requires. Look for the pair of swans and other bird life that inhabit this area virtually year-round. If there is good snow cover we'll X-country ski instead. Steady rain or extreme weather cancels. Call leader for meeting time & place. Marie Caruso, 845-452-9086.

Friday, March 23; Level F- *Yes, this is a Couch Potato, DVD movie event. If you missed “Swim for the River” plan to see it at Karen Cathers home at 1 Dug Rd., New Paltz. Call her at 255-3972. An opportunity to meet likeminded folks.*

Sat., March 31; Level B+. Mohonk Preserve. Meet at Spring Farm Trailhead. Some rock scrambling if conditions permit. Hike or snowshoe depending on weather conditions at that time. 7 miles loop hike to explore the rock formations throughout this area. \$9.00 day fee for non-member. Joint with Mohonk Singles. Potluck afterwards at leader's house. Call leader for directions Tonda Highley 845-255-9933 or highleyt@newpaltz.edu.

Sat. April 7, Level B+/A-; Fahnestock Loop. Moderate 6-7 miles. We'll identify spring flowers, and look for bobolinks. Leader: Georgette Weir, 462-0142.

Sat., April 21; Level A+. 3 Peak hike (Black Head range in the Catskill Mountains). 10+ miles strenuous ups. Study geological differences of the peaks. 9:30 AM meeting time at Park and Ride opposite south bound entrance, Exit 20 Thruway Saugerties. Call leader Tonda at 255-9933 for directions.

Sun., April 22; Level C. 1 mile loop. Muller Pond Trail at the Stony Kill Farm Environmental Ed. Center. Great place for kids/adults to examine nature and interact with animals. Take 9D to Fishkill Rt.36. Turn east...make quick right into trailhead parking lot. Rain cancels. Mike Boyajian, 845 897 2487.

Sun., April 29; Level C. Black Rock Forest; Hike trails and wood roads; Locate numerous reservoirs and learn about this area of natural and historical significance. Rain cancels; call Arlene 246-2069 for time and meeting place.

Sat. May 5; Level A; Hike with a little trail maintenance in Minnewaska S.P. Mossy Glen Trail to Blueberry Run up to Castle Point. We may spend up to one hour clipping back blueberry bushes. Help Sierra Club give a little bit back to the trails and support our group's membership in the NY-NJ Trail Conference. Leader: Georgette Weir, 462-0142.

Sat., May 12; Level C/B. Duck Pond Carriageway, Easy-Moderate 6 miles includes the Lemon Squeeze with it's unique crevice. 10AM to 3PM. Potluck afterwards at leader's house. Meet at Mohonk Preserve Visitor's Center. Fee required for non-members. Leader: Tonda Highley 255-9933.

Sun., May 13 Catskills Mountains - joint with ADK - A/B⁺ This is the fourth of the five “walk through geological time” hikes (Taconic Mountains, Shawangunk ridge, New York City, Catskills and Adirondacks) that will give us an idea of the very rich geological history of New York and of the North East. This hike – to be finalized – will take us along some of some of the unique geological formations of the Catskills. Leaders: Jean-Claude Fouéré (jcfouere@optonline.net; 1-845-462 0142) and Alvin DeMaria (demonalvin@yahoo.com); 255 1704. Contact leaders for hike description, meeting place and time, and for carpool arrangements.

Sun., May 20; Level C. 10AM Woodland Trail ADA Accessible hike on crushed stone and clay path. Easy 1 mile loop through deep hardwood forest with open meadow vistas. Meet: Verplanck Manor House parking lot at Stony Kill Farm Environmental Center in Wappingers Falls. Leaders: Mike Boyajian, 845-897-2487, Marie Caruso, 845-452-9086.



So! It is a new year and the same old topic. **The Private Well Testing Law**, is back in the news. It never really left. Areas of concern keep popping up. A school in Highland needed to bring water into their school for drinking and cooking after elevated levels of the chemical toluene were found in their ground water supply. Did the officials notify home owners using the same aquifer water near the school, that they should test their water?

In Dutchess County the issue was finally voted upon in the county legislature. The law passed by 1 vote, 13-12. All the republicans voted no except for one, East Fishkill Legislator Marge Horton. It is sad that clean drinking water has basically become a party line vote.

By the time you get this newsletter you will know whether the Dutchess County Executive, Steinhaus, vetoed the law or not. His county address this year focused on the environment. But he did not really discuss the new law. It sounded like he wants to make yet another committee so they can keep talking about it. After 20 or so hearings since the year 2000, it is time for action. Talk is expensive. Another committee means just another stalling tactic. I am hopeful that he will not veto the law.

The legislators against this law do not feel people should have to spend \$500 to test a their wells before selling their homes. **Testing would do a few things. It will make it possible for the county to track groundwater quality using their multi-million dollar GIS system. Neighbors will be alerted if a well is found to be contaminated. The test results are also shared with the prospective buyer.**

***Who Pays More?**

***Compare...**the amount of money someone pays for a home with a public well. Those people **MUST** pay a tax of about one thousand dollars per year for the use of water. It is cheaper for a developer of new neighborhoods to build a public system and then over charge for use of that system than it is to drill a new well for each home. So let's see. For example, you live in your home with a private well for 10 years. Most people unfortunately will not test the water which means they have spent nothing. As opposed to someone who has a public well who by now has spent about **\$10,000.00!** Both decide to move. The person with the private well must do a \$500 water test. The person selling the home with the private well is still ahead by \$9,500.00! Even if someone with a private well tests their water every year, they are still ahead by 50%. Make sense to you?.

Your county legislators who voted against the Well Testing Law, will be up for election November, 2007. This includes County Supervisor Steinhaus. These are the same legislators that saw no problem making taxpayers pay millions of dollars to get water for IBM, a multi-multi billion dollar company that needed water because they contaminated the water supply they have. Isn't that ironic?

Voters have the power to make a change. Register to vote and do your research! Take a look at what is really going on and if you do not like what you see, vote for someone new. Vote for someone who does not always tow the party line but understands what they are voting for and makes an educated decision while representing the people. **See you next newsletter!**

Debra Hall - Sierra Club Mid Hudson Group Conservation Chair, sierradutchess@optonline.net

Hopewell Junction Citizens for Clean Water
www.hopewell-junction-citizens-for-clean-water.org
debraduncan@optonline.net

Conservation Leadership Could Use Help

While Debra Hall takes over as Conservation Chair (see above), Roberta Clements will function as co-chair focusing on Ulster County Issues. Roberta is monitoring the Kingston Waterfront. Contact her at Rac137@juno.com.

Step It Up on April 14th!

On Saturday, April 14, 2007, thousands of concerned citizens will gather at hundreds of places across the country and raise their voices about climate change, asking Congress to "Step It Up!" and cut carbon emissions 80% by 2050 - a target that experts say is the best hope for avoiding the worst consequences of global warming. The campaign is asking groups of concerned citizens to gather in their communities on April 14, hoist a banner, and take a photo. Campaign organizers will then link the protest pictures together electronically via the web, and **"before the weekend is out, we'll have the largest protest the country has ever seen."** **Neighborhood Earth Watch, a grassroots group started by Hudson Valley parents concerned about global warming** is stepping up with an event to gather at a place that is important to the community, and threatened by global warming. The event may include music, poetry, and maybe a speaker or two. Contact Heather Gibbons at heatherog85@yahoo.com.



Sierra Club / Northeast Regional Committee Cool Cities Training Part II: June 1 - 3, 2007

NERC's Cool Cities Training:

Learn how to be a trainer/and assist other volunteers in getting communities, universities, and other entities to take the pledge for the Mayors' Initiative to achieve the Kyoto Protocols' guidelines!

Location:

Hulbert Outdoor Educational Center, Fairlee, VT

For inquiries, contact:

mary.anne.jaffe@sierraclub.org, 518-587-9166
and see our website for latest updates:
<http://www.sierraclub.org/rcc/northeast/index.asp>

The NY/NJ Trail Conference,

of which Mid-Hudson Sierra Club is a member, is organizing a week of regional hikes, workshops, etc. during the week of **July 13-20**. Information will be on the web at **www.Ramapo07.org**. **Registration opens March 1st**.

Please Note April 3rd – ADK Invitation to SC.

Edward Goodell, Exec. Director of NY/NJTC will speak at the Central Hudson Auditorium at 7:00.

Topic: Hiking Trails, A Regional Picture: Paths into Nature and Tools for Environmental Protection

Tag Sale



**Saturday
September
15th, 2007
Jot it down!**

Kids – Free tree seedlings.

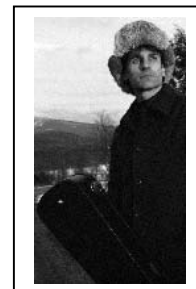
Schools should contact DEC's Saratoga Tree Nursery at 518-587-1120. Request a School Seedling Program.

**Tivoli Artist's
Co-op!**

Silent auction of birdhouses. ½ \$ goes to local Habitat for Humanity and 1/2 for gallery repairs.
Contact:
volk@juno.com

CDs by James Krueger

James Krueger has a brand new CD out entitled "Live in Denver, NY". Captivating melodies and thought provoking lyrics. In order for Sierra Club to benefit from purchases the CD must be purchased through his website www.jameskrueger.com and you must put Sierra Club in the comments field. You can also order by phone at 845- 331-5851.



Vote!!! Sierra Club wants to remind you to vote in the national election for Board of Directors. You will receive a ballot in the mail in March. The voting turnout for this important election has been discouraging so please don't discard the ballot or forget to vote. Read the ballot statements and make your choices for the people who will represent our environmental interests. They speak for you!

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Sierra Club
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