

Fresh Air



SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

December 2002 Volume 34, Issue 4

Get Outside!

Wednesday, December 4 walk, (C)
North Lake and North Point : We follow the Escarpment trail up to North Point. The easy 4 miles RT ascent about 900 feet. Expect cold winds, dress warm and enjoy the views. Meet at Thruway Exit 21 Catskill, at the park and Ride Parking Lot at 9:00 AM. L Gerry Weber (518)758-7189 or gww@berk.com With Mohawk-Hudson AMC

Sunday, Dec. 8 walk Pawling Nature Preserve (C+)
We meet at 10:30 AM at Pawling Nature Preserve. Near the beginning of the hike, we will walk by a very lovely gorge. We will hike about five miles over moderate terrain in the woods along the Hammersly Ridge. Joint with the Mohican Chapter. Meeting Time/Place: Call leader to register. Leader: Ben Shor. : (845) 236-4291 With Mid-Hudson ADK

Saturday, Dec. 21 (C + or B)
Slide Mountain (Catskills) Celebrate the Winter Solstice as we hike Slide Mountain in the Catskills. An easy trail, but bring your snow

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Chair's Corner

Writing for a quarterly newsletter is weird and difficult. Here I am, recuperating from my Halloween Haunted Yard, but needing to go back in time to thank **Janet Sabatino** and her great crew, for our September Tag Sale (we didn't do quite as well as other years, but given illnesses, low volunteer turnout, and hot weather, it was still a good day!), as well as to give advance notice of our winter and spring events - such as a spring tour of the **Hudson Valley Materials Exchange!** We especially thank **Bill Collier** for mowing the yard that week along with his work that day, **Dave Page** for transporting the truck, and Gerald Davison! We also invite anyone to join a Tag Sale brainstorming committee, as per helper **Ronnie Brown's** idea.

Continuing with spring first: This may be a silly idea, but as I huffed and puffed and pulled weeds out by hand this year, it occurred to me that many hands might make light work. What if a crew of us traveled around to each others' houses one day this spring and weeded (I'm sure most Sierrans don't use evil pesticides)? If this sounds good, contact me at bibis@juno.com.

Also let me know if you would be interested in a Sierra wine & cheese party and fundraiser, which would probably take place at Fred Schaeffer's charming 1790 "office" in Pleasant Valley, probably a Saturday night in late March, with Congressman Hinchey invited? Check your future spring newsletter - or our website! - for details. In fact, always keep in mind that with our newsletter coming out quarterly, you will find more current information, corrected errors, new activities, short-dated items (such as buying Entertainment Books in November) etc. at <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/midhudson> - and maybe YOUR nature photo, if you submit it!

Turning back to (brr) winter: **Manna Jo Greene**, our interesting speaker from April, has been building a green **Sustainability Center**, which just needs a few more funds and materials. We are invited to take a free tour (although donations are Most Welcome), which we will do on **Saturday, January 11** at 3PM (snow date Jan 25). Contact Mannajo@mail.

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SPEAKER SOCIALS :

We have no Speaker Socials in the winter, so let's look back at some past ones:

Perhaps it was the fact that we had just had songwriter Jay Mankita perform a year ago, but no one except ye ill chair and her driver came to the May Social! However, we had a larger number turn out in June for Ray Conte of the **Mid-Hudson Vegetarian Society**, who, despite the somehow-changed description in the spring "Fresh Air," really was the featured main speaker (apologies to the Society). Our own Georgette Weir was the opening speaker, who spoke for a few minutes on the **New Jersey - New York Trail Conference**. This organization, which has been around since 1920, puts out "*The Trail Walker*" and has a website, which you can reach through the "Links" page on our website. Our former editor Georgette told us they need trail maintainers - anything from just clipping blueberries to more heavy duty work, so if interested, contact her or check the website www.nynjtc.org.

Then we heard some statistics from the MHVS (www.MHVS.org) how watching what we eat impacts not only our health, but the world's. A reduction of merely 10% of meat consumption can feed

100,000 more people. It takes 125 gallons of water to produce one pound of wheat, compared to 5000 for producing one pound of beef. The fact that there are three times the amount of livestock (20 billion) compared to people creates some rather sobering "after-effects," such as 130 times more excrement than humans; we produce 20 tons of animal manure annually per household. The production of one hamburger patty uses up 20 miles worth of fuel, and one can save more water by eating one less pound of beef (a year, I think) than by not showering for a whole year. Listeners were interested that Mr. Conte, a firefighter, felt more energetic with his vegetarian diet. MHVS president Roberta Schiff added some nutritional facts and told us a free vegetarian starter kit can be had by calling 757-622-PETA. It certainly gave some food for thought!

This was the last Social for the summer, and our last one as of this writing was Fran Dunwell of the DEC. Unfortunately a "No'easter" kept most people home that night. We hope to tell you of a good turnout for hiking guide Peter Kick on 11/20!

This issue's websites:

www.treesfortigers.org

http://www.americanforests.org/global_releaf/

Will the new member who talked at the picnic of teaching us how to build solar panels please get back in touch with me (bibis@juno.com/ 255-5528)? I lost your info!

Send any submissions for next issue by Feb 1st to **Laurie Treacy** at llt806@optonline.net - our new editor! After a long run, Jim Mays is stepping down as editor due to his national Sierra Club duties (he's on the Human Rights and Responsible Trade Program Committees). Thanks, Jim and Laurie!

Interested in working on **Fair Trade and Human Rights in the Environment** issues? Contact Jim Mays at: 845-657-2013 or jmays@ulster.net



Do you have a favorite outdoor/nature book or magazine article? It can be fiction or non-fiction. Sharing and discussing what you liked/disliked about it can be a pleasant way to spend a chilly winter evening. If you might be interested in forming a new "Book Discussion" group of Sierrans, give me a call at (845) 691-4622. If there is enough interest, I'll get back to you with details. Barb Mulder

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FUNDRAISING IS EASY WITH
bookfairs

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Chair's Corner

clearwater.org or 845-687-9253 for directions to 148 Cottekill Rd, Cottekill; I'll host the event (255-5528).

And, soonest of all, comes our **Holiday Party!** Come to the large room upstairs in the Village Hall of New Paltz on Plattekill Avenue with desserts and a gift for our "**Gimme Grabbee Gift Exchange**" on **Saturday, December 14th** at 7pm. See elsewhere in this issue for a description, or, contact me or check our website! The day after is Sierra Day at **Barnes & Noble** in Poughkeepsie! If you like to gift wrap, please sign up for a shift to come help us gift wrap books on **Sunday December 15** anytime between 9AM - 11PM, but **Please** call me ahead of time so I can make sure we have all slots covered - otherwise we can't do it. Our club gets to keep all donations that the customers might give us for wrapping their books, and B&N supplies all the gift wrap.

And, in this issue is a holiday gift for you and for all of us! Once a quarter, we can have a two-week Coupon Book Faire at **Waldenbooks**. From **December 14-28**, you can take this coupon (or copies thereof!) to the store and receive 10% off your purchases. Our group then gets an additional ten percent donated to us! Look for future coupons in each of our quarterly newsletters - and may any holiday you celebrate be merry and bright!

WINTER CALENDAR:

Sat Dec 14 - Holiday Party in New Paltz
Sat Dec 14 - Sat Dec 28: Coupon good at Waldenbooks

Sun Dec 15 - Sierra Volunteer Day at Barnes & Noble Poughkeepsie

Dec 31 - deadline for voting: PLEASE NOTICE WE NEED BOARD MEMBERS! Help!! A hardworking Issues Chair especially needed.

Sat Jan 11 - Tour of Sustainability Center in Cottekill; snowdate 1/25

Feb 1st: Mar-Apr-May newsletter deadline

March 22 or 29: wine & cheese party in Pleasant Valley

Sometime in March or April: tour of HVME w/new employee Ronnie Brown!

No date: any *local* Outings! Hike/Stroll

Leaders *desperately* needed - contact Joanne Steele at aardvark@ulster.net or -- [339 7526] She is very much interested in your sharing your favorite outings with fellow members!

HOLIDAY PARTY DETAILS:

Show off your creative "recycling" talents (and possibly weird sense of humor) by finding an inexpensive gift and wrapping it in the most creative or funny or confounding way possible, and bringing it to our December Holiday Party for our GIMME GRABBEE GIFT EXCHANGE! This is a popular event for both young and old, for both participants and watchers (but it's more fun if you participate!) Those bearing gifts will receive a number; number one picks a present from the pile. Number two can pick from the pile, OR take the gift from #1, who then takes another from the pile. Number 3 can pick from the pile, OR take #1's, who can take #2's who can take #3's --by #10, these STILL-WRAPPED gifts have not only exchanged hands many times but have also obtained a mysterious attraction! We will also enjoy holiday yummys, especially if everyone brings something to share at 7PM 12/14. We will be in the upstairs room of the Village Hall on Plattekill Avenue (next to the firehouse) in New Paltz.

Outside!

shoes. Leader: Joe Gardner, (518) 439-1074; jgardnerjr@juno.com Sierra Club & Mohawk-Hudson AMC:

Sunday, Dec. 28; hike (B) 6 miles Ramapo Historic Palisades 3 [T.C. Map #4A]

See the place where the British landed in November, 1776, the night after they took Fort Washington in Manhattan. Hike the road (now a trail), the British took up the Palisades. Flat except for a 400 ft climb. Possible detour to the Green Brook Preserve. Directions: From Palisades Interstate Parkway, take Exit 2 and follow directions for the Parkway Police continuing down hill on road that leads to Alpine Boat Basin. Joint with North Jersey. Bad weather cancels. Leader: George Preoteasa (201) 569-0244; gpreoteasa@att.net Meet in Alpine Boat Basin Parking Lot at 10:30 AM. With ADK

Saturday, Feb. 15, Hike, Schenectady (C)

Start 2 PM. Hike for conservation with some inner-city kids from Quest in Schenectady. Historic walks in the Stockade and along the Mohawk Bike Path to explore nature in an urban setting. Join us after for dinner and entertainment at Quest (\$5 don). Co-leaders: Franklin Whitson (518)346-2731, Judy Atchinson (518)370-2712 and Joe Gardner (518) 439-1074. Sierra Club, AMC and Mohawk Valley Hiking Club.

Threat to Shawangunk Ridge

Called by the Nature Conservancy "one of the last great places" on the planet, the wild ridgeline of the Shawangunks may see an expensive resort/housing development complete with golf course in its future.

The owners of the 2,700 acre Awosting Reserve, in Gardiner and Shawangunk Townships of Ulster County, are floating plans for the largest project since the Marriott Corp.'s proposal that culminated in the creation of the Minnewaska State Park in the 1980s. No actual proposal has been presented to any governmental agency, so there is little factual information available.

However, any project on the ridge or its environs would be opposed by groups that have been increasingly successful in their efforts to protect the entirety of the ridge, especially the sections north of State Rt. 52. Keith LaBudde, president of Friends of the Shawangunks, one of the principle groups advocating protection, is quoted as saying: "This could have an horrendous impact on the ridge, depending on how it's handled." He went on to say that the primary environmental concerns could include the visual impact, as well as questions about water and how sewage is handled in the impervious strata of the region.

The Mid-Hudson Sierra Club has been a long time supporter of protection for the ridge, being one of the organizations behind the creation of the park, and more recently involved in the reconstruction of the power line that crosses the park near Gertrude's Nose.

Mid-Hudson Executive Committee Elections

Candidate Statements:

Fred Schaeffer:

I have lived in the Hudson Valley for over 30 years, enjoying its rural beauty in many ways. I believe most people want to preserve the rural atmosphere of the area and that the Sierra Club should play a role in the efforts to do so. As a bicycling enthusiast I have been very active in advocating rail trails and other amenities which benefit all of us who love outdoor activities. I'll work to coordinate Sierra Club activities with other environmentally friendly groups so that we are a force in the future direction of the area. (454-1190)

Gerald Davison:

What the Mid-Hudson Group needs is for more of you out there to become actively involved in the Club. Attend membership meetings; go on hikes; volunteer to lead a hike; volunteer to run for election to the Executive Committee; help with our annual Tag Sale. Here in the Mid-Hudson area there is an unusual concentration of environmental organizations, mostly more specialized in some way than the Sierra Club. As a result, although we have many members, those who develop some intense interest and might become active in the Club tend to drift off to some other organization that specializes in their area of interest. Still, the Sierra Club has a number of things that make it special: it is chartered 501(c)4 and is politically effective nationally; it is

controlled by its members; and it has a state and national staff to support its members efforts. Questions? Call me: [845] 339 4509.

Note: We have four positions to fill on your Group's Executive Committee, with one more likely to be vacant by the first of the year. At publication time only two people, Fred Schaeffer and Gerald Davison had come forward to volunteer to serve.

***Mid-Hudson Group
Sierra Club
PO Box 1012
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