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Fresh Air

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Atlantic Chapter Mid-Hudson Group

Winter 2005 Vol. 38 Issue 4

Chair's Corner:

Be a Mid-Hudson Hero!

Given the low funding per member National Sierra gives our state chapter (\$3), and then what the state chapter gives the local groups (48 cents in "hard money"), Mid-Hudson is strapped for cash. The board is even wondering if we can continue mailing out "welcome" letters and questionnaires to new members each month, in order to increase involvement, which is vital to our group's existence.

Can you be a Mid-Hudson Hero? Donate stamps or envelopes, or pay for copies, or send a check made out to Mid-Hudson Sierra Club, POB 1012, Poughkeepsie, NY 12602? Each newsletter costs us about \$700... **can you pay for a page, or donate dots?** Can you think of and **take on a new fundraising project for us?** (See our website for ideas at <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/midhudson>; also check "summer 2004 newsletter" for explanation about hard/soft money woes). And stay "tuned" for a spring concert fundraiser and a **March New Member** party.

Heroes who have been hard at work: Carol Jarvis and her great team of volunteers brought in \$1200, \$300 more than usual, from the Tag Sale; MANY thanks to Carol, & to all who worked, donated, and shopped! **Marjorie Russell** has stuffed thousands of envelopes for new members and driven 70 miles each way to attend board meetings for years, but is now stepping off the board. We thank her for her dedication and thank **Nancy Keenan-Rich** for coming on board. We thank **Tonda Highley** for becoming our new Outings Chair. She is eager to hear from YOU - suggest a hike or walk you can lead this spring at highleyt@newpaltz.edu (845-255-9933).

A big thank you to the following for their donations to the Tag Sale raffle: **Peak Performance Sports, El Alamo Restaurant, The Rustic Bohemian, Huguenot Street Farm**, Thanks to members **Marie Caruso** and **Georgette Weir** for contributing backpack items, to **Paul Rich** for the tent & set-up, and artists **Cornelia Smith** and **Karl Volk** who donated original artwork. **Alexis Jette** donated time in the raffle tent which was much appreciated and **Carol Jarvis** helped in the coordination of this first time event.

Holiday Gift wrap Fundraiser at Barnes & Noble (Pok) on Sat. 12/17 from 9-3pm.

Volunteers are always needed:

The January board meeting is when we choose volunteers for positions like Program Chair, etc. If you think you can help in any way please feel free to come to the Village Hall in New Paltz at 6:30 p.m. and help us all **Have a Happy New Year!** **Bibi Sandstrom**

Help Wanted!



Consignment: Beige, leather loveseat and recliner. If interested contact Bibi at bibis@juno.com. A portion of the proceeds benefits MHSC. \$\$\$

Think Solar! We had a very well attended Speaker Social in May on building your own solar hot water heater. You can get a \$5 pamphlet that describes how to do it from: Maine Solar Energy Association RR1, Box 7751 Jonesport, ME 04749

Clip the coupon – but remember the outings on the other side!

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Please support Sierra Club by shopping at Waldenbooks from December 10th to the 24th 2005

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Booksellers: Use item or group disc. code 47 to discount items 10%

Fundraising is easy with Bookfairs!

Winter Outings:

Rating System:

Class A - Difficult: 1500' climb/more than 8 mi.

Class B - Moderate: Less than 1500' climb 6mi.

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



Outings Coordinator: Tonda Highley. Contact her to lead an outing at 255-9933 or highleyt@newpaltz.edu

*"I care to live only to entice people
to look at Nature's loveliness"*
John Muir

Sat. Jan. 7; Level B Hike (or snowshoe) in Fahnestock State Park. Joint with ADK. We'll look for signs of ecological change in an area that historically was a center for mining and agriculture in the Hudson Valley. Route to be determined; about 6 miles. Contact leaders for meeting time and place: Georgette Weir and Jean-Claude Fouere, 462-0142.

Sat. January 21; Level B-C Loop hike/snowshoe up Mt. Tremper, trailhead to trailhead. Joint with Mohonk Singles. Learn some of the history and importance of fire towers in the Catskills. Meet the leader at 9:30 AM at Sweet Sue's in Phoenicia on Rte. 28. Take exit 19 off thruway, follow signs to Route 28. Approximately 30 minutes from exit. Leader: Tonda Highley, 845-255-9933. Inquire about carpooling and bring lunch and water.

Sat. Feb. 4; Level B+/A Cross-country ski at Minnewaska State Park.; fee. Joint with ADK.

We'll ski carriage roads, going to Castle Point (groomed) and, depending on conditions, perhaps circling Awosting Lake (not groomed). This is also an opportunity to view the Awosting Reserve and discuss with the leader this parcel of land which may still be at risk for development (see p.3). Meet at upper parking lot at 9:15 (park opens at 9). Bring lunch and plenty of water. Call to confirm. Leaders: Jean-Claude Fouere and Georgette Weir, 462-0142.

Sat. Feb. 11; Level B, Cross country ski at Fahnestock State Park, Joint with ADK.

Easy to intermediate trails, about 5 miles. If no snow, we'll hike instead. This is an opportunity to traverse land which was once home to early settlers. Learn about signs of their hardscrabble existence like foundations and cellar holes. Watch for deer and identify wintering birds. For meeting time and place, contact leader, Marie Caruso, at 845-452-9086 or mclagr@aol.com.

Feb. 15 and 16; Mid-week overnight cross country ski trip at Lapland Lake. Explore the ecology of the lower Adirondacks at a Finnish style resort located in Northville and the ADK Forest Preserve. This wilderness area offers us an opportunity to study the winter woods, identify trees, and note animal tracks. Guests can enjoy skiing, snowshoeing, tubing, and ice skating with a relaxing sauna at the end of the day. Share a tupa (cabin) which includes kitchen facilities. Fee includes trail pass and all facilities except rentals. \$150.00 plus tax for two nights. Learn more at www.LaplandLake.com. Contact leader Arlene Canonico at 845-246-2069 or banjosnowy@aol.com to sign up. Accommodations are limited; SC members have first dibs until Jan.10th.

Sun. Feb. 26; Eagle Spotting on the Hudson (unrated). Joint with ADK.

An aggressive restoration program has brought the endangered bald eagle back to the Hudson. Let's see if we can spot these survivors with binoculars along the tree line or on ice floes. Bring a spotting scope if you have it. Information on eagle habits and habitats will be provided. Maybe take a short hike or snowshoe. Meet the leader behind Norrie Pt. Environmental Education center on the viewing deck at 2:30. Bring a warm beverage and snack. Inclement weather cancels. Leader: Nancy Keenan-Rich, 452-1727.

March 2006 - New Member Party in the works. Details to come in the Spring Fresh Air.



Conservation Corner:

Hopewell Junction:

The Hopewell Junction Citizens for Clean Water has a big concern about the new private well testing law. The Dutchess County Board of Health sanitary code change is not being worked on nor getting funded. Originally the Board of Health wanted the change which is called article 28, on January 1, 2006. But the Dutchess Legislature said they needed more time. This was months ago and no work has been done to get this program working. In fact, the 2006 budget does not mention the well testing law. This is a sure sign that although the Board of Health wants this law, the county does not. Perhaps it might make the county look bad if more pockets of contamination are found. Whatever the reason, without this needed law more pregnant woman, more children, more residents will unknowingly drink, wash in, and in some cases breathe toxic chemicals and this needs to stop.

We are asking for concerned residents to please contact their legislator and tell them that they must fund the private well testing law so the program is ready by July 1, 2006. Address: **Dutchess County Legislature**, 22 Market St., Poughkeepsie NY 12601 (T) (845)486-2100, (F) (845) 486-2113. E-mail: countylegislature@co.*dutchess*.ny.us Anyone with questions can contact Debra Hall at: TCEINWELLWATER@optonline.net

It has been approximately 18 months since the Hopewell Precision Superfund site has had a community meeting with any agency working on the site. Residents requested a meeting with the EPA and the NYS Department of Health. Because of this request a meeting was to have taken place on December 1, 2005 @ Gayhead Elementary School (as of this winter issue of Fresh Air). For information on the outcome of this meeting contact Debra Hall Hopewell Junction Citizens For Clean Water www.hopewell-junction-citizens-for-clean-water.org and/or TCEINWELLWATER@optonline.net

Debra Hall - MHSC Conservation Co-Chair
sierradutchess@optonline.net

Hyde Park and Balanced Growth

Change is coming to the Hyde Park town board due to the efforts of many people and groups including Stop the Sprawl. The town's Media Committee also deserves a lot of credit for keeping the town board meeting TV broadcasts going when the committee was under a great deal of pressure to abandon them. A lot of people were able to watch what was happening at the town board meetings and adjust their votes accordingly. Pompey Delafield won by over 1000 votes! Pompey is a consensus builder and that is what is sorely needed in Hyde Park. He will work to channel development so that it is of benefit to the town. There is a lot on the drawing boards so we now have the opportunity to see that it gets done right.

Herb Sweet

Awosting Reserve and Preservation

As many of you know, the **Trust for Public Land** and the **Open Space Institute** signed a contract to purchase the 2500 acre **Awosting Reserve on the Shawangunk Ridge** in Ulster County. The plan is to resell the parcel to NYS which would enable expansion of the borders of Minnewaska State Park. Although not a done deal this is a major victory for environmentalists who battled a large and inappropriate development project. The group, Save the Ridge, spearheaded the campaign to prevent development and Mid-Hudson Sierra Club joined in opposition to it. When criticized by the developer Roger Beck, for a premature stance, Bibi Sandstrom, MHSC chair, responded "We did this to let any developer know that the Sierra Club is concerned about the environmentally sensitive ecosystem on the ridge".

Boycott Marriott!

Minnewaska Flash from the Past

For those of you who don't remember this battle cry and bumper sticker, Minnewaska State Park exists due to the efforts of local environmental groups including MHSC. For many years, Marie Caruso, MHSC activist and past Chair was at the forefront of this fight to prevent Marriott Corporation from purchasing the Minnewaska parcel and developing a hotel complex. This long and contentious battle ended when NYS obtained the land through eminent domain. Think about this victory when enjoying the park.. Donations from members throughout the state helped financially support this successful effort.

Sierra Club Ballot

An election is being held to fill 3 vacancies on the Mid-Hudson Sierra Club Executive Committee. The three candidates are listed below.

Election rules are as follows:

1. Only members of the MHSC may vote
2. Write-in candidates are allowed in addition to the candidates selected and listed below.

WRITE –IN VOTE: _____

_____ **Roberta Clements**

Current member of the Executive Committee and has actively pursued conservation issues in Ulster County . Roberta has been invaluable in her role as Conservation Chair and unfortunately her statement was not available at press time.

_____ **Gerald A. Davison**

Served 9 years on the Mid-Hudson Group executive committee; Group’s delegate to the Atlantic Chapter for 8 plus years. Extensive participation in recent years in Group’s annual Tag Sale fundraising event. Instrumental in getting Chapter to do its part in funding Stewart Airport litigation. “I believe when it comes to doing things right, “the devil is in the details”. We must all be vigilant to maintain the Club’s “grass roots” status (members in charge, not staff; directors accountable, not self- perpetuating. I was inactive when I first joined the Club. But after about 15 years I attended meetings, led a few hikes, and was elected to the executive committee. I would like to continue and appreciate your vote. Questions? (845) 339-4509.

_____ **Lynne Ridgeway**

In 2002, I retired from a senior executive position after 35 years in a major NYC health insurance firm. I have over 20 years of leadership experience in not-for-profit organizations. I’ve been a birder over 30 years, an environmentalist all my life and a Sierra Club member more than two decades. I agree with Sierra Club’s principles on many important environmental issues and believe my consensus building and organizational skills could be useful contributions. I felt an immediate community of interest and fellowship with many of the people I met at Mid Hudson Group’s 2004 “new members social.” Those are the primary reasons I responded to your 2005 ad for an Executive Board Member. I was also pleased to actively participate in the 2005 annual tag sale. I would truly like to have a meaningful place on your leadership team and this chance to put my abilities to good use.

3. Vote for up to **3 candidates** – nominated and/or write-in by making a check mark next to the appropriate names.

4. **Place the ballot in an envelope and mail by Dec. 31 to: Mid-Hudson Sierra Club
PO box 1012
Poughkeepsie, NY 12602**

5. **Sign the envelope in upper left corner** (2 signatures for 2 members on same ballot). The envelope will be separated from the ballot before counting takes place.

**Mid-Hudson Group
Sierra Club
P.O. Box 1012
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