



## THE ENGAGED SIERRAN



### SEND US YOUR WINTER PHOTOS!

We'd love to see how you've been enjoying the outdoors this winter! Send your favorite photo to [NHSC603@gmail.com](mailto:NHSC603@gmail.com), and we'll publish the best ones in next month's newsletter and on our website.

Co-editor Alice Pearman took this photo while cross-country skiing near Sunapee.

### IT'S LOBBY NIGHT!

**Tuesday, February 25, 6-8 p.m.**  
Concord, NH

**You are the ones we have been waiting for!** Come learn about the hot environmental topics and how to support climate action at the State House. The climate deniers are here in full force and **we need you to speak up** for smart climate solutions in NH.

Learn about the legislative process, the bills and the solutions NHSC is fighting to support. Be part of the solution.

**FREE and OPEN to climate action supporters.** [RSVP Online.](#)

### Open House: Energy upgrades in action at the NHSPCA

**Thursday, February 27, 3-5:30 p.m.**

104 Portsmouth Ave, Stratham

Join Revision Energy at the NH Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) to learn about recent, on site sustainable energy upgrades, including a solar hot water system and wood pellet boiler.

Find out how ReVision Energy and Froling Energy partnered to help this local non-profit save time and money by simply upgrading their heat and hot water utilities to not only reduce their financial burden, but also their global impact! Talk begins at 3 pm, followed by a tour at 3:45 pm.



Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP with Kimry Corrette by calling 603-679-1777 or email [kimry@revisionenergy.com](mailto:kimry@revisionenergy.com). For directions, visit <http://www.nhspca.org/Articles.asp?ID=253>

### VERMICULTURE: COMPOSTING WITH WORMS!

by Lee Perrault

The minute I read about it the first time, I was intrigued. Could a pound on of worms relieve me of having to trudge through the snow, pound and pull at the frozen composting lid, all the while freezing my fingers? My imagination kicked into gear as I realized that my cellar, just inside the walkout bulkhead, would be the perfect place for a large plastic bin full of red wigglers. I could "take out" the garbage in my bunny slippers and bathrobe!

This information "composted" for a few months, as I went on with my daily life, and then, up popped the subject again one fall day. I was hooked, as they say, and put in a call to one Ms. Joan O'Connor in Henniker, NH. I had read that she is THE local authority on this subject, and I was not disappointed. Bubbling with enthusiasm and information about her beloved red wigglers, 'The Worm Lady' told me that I could pick up a bucket of them in Concord at Bonafide Green Goods on South Main Street, along with several sheets of tips and information. That was close to four years ago, and the rest, as they say, is verm history.

Once I had my wigglers, my good husband purchased a large bin, about 36" L x 20" W x 24" D (purple seems to agree with them!), I drilled small holes in the bottom for drainage, and cut out some of the cover, taping screening over those areas for ventilation. Next, we placed the bin on a couple of wooden rails across a catch basin. Remember the holes I drilled in the bottom? They allow any excess moisture to drain from the bottom of the bin into the catch basin. Finally, I added a good layer of moist, shredded newspaper, and in went the worms. Since my bin is deeper than recommended, I have found that when I add scraps, I wear latex gloves and pull up all the compost in one end, add fresh paper, add the scraps, followed by some peat, and then gently replace the compost. It's my way of 'turning' my worm bin to keep it aerated and just dry enough. If you purchase a shallower bin, you will not need to do this so often.

Happily, I can say that I have had no mishaps with my worm colony, feeding them approximately one to two times per week. We don't eat meat in our house, so we probably generate more vegetable waste than two people usually do, so some still goes in the outdoor compost during the summer months.

I have discovered some things as I've plodded along:

- There are simply too many of those little munchers to know by name!
- Gently turning the compost and adding a ground layer of torn strips of newspaper at regular intervals helps prevent the compost from getting too wet.
- Waiting too long to compost waste means messier, smellier work, and wetter scraps (worms like fresh veggies, too!). We all get busy, but it's more pleasant to let the scraps break down in the bin, rather than in your scrap bucket.
- A bucket of moist peat moss is a must, so that you can sprinkle it over the fresh addition, for moisture control and odor prevention, while still adding to harvestable compost.
- When you're ready to harvest all that black gold, take the bin out into the bright sun, or place it under bright light, which drives the worms down into the dark. The easiest way, the dump method, is to place a tarp in the sunshine, make a bunch of volcanoes, wait an hour and remove the top layers, repeating until all the worms are at the bottom. You can also make composting tea to fertilize your plants. Your house plants and landscaping will love you, and it won't cost a penny. I can't tell you how gorgeous the composted soil is... rich, black and truly something you can bury your nose in. Smell has never once been an issue with my worms, and they really get no doting.

So, happy worm composting, and, if you play this right, you just may be able to get your kids excited enough to do the feeding, while you're repotting those thriving house plants!

Additional Resources:

[www.bonafidegreengoods.com](http://www.bonafidegreengoods.com)

[www.joansworms.com](http://www.joansworms.com)



## VOLUNTEERS ENJOY STATE OF THE UNION PARTY

Kate, Jillian and Alicia, along with approximately 30 other supporters and members, came to the True Brew in Concord to watch the President's **State of the Union address** televised on Tuesday, January 28. We spiced up the speech with "State of the Union Bingo" and fabulous prizes! Thank you one and all who came.

*Photo by Thomas Hobbs*

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