



IROQUOIS MESSENGER

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Sierra Club and People's Environmental Network of New York will convene a Forum on

Wednesday, May 28 from 6 to 9 PM

**University United Methodist Church
1085 E. Genesee Street, Syracuse**

This year we focus on coal gasification and the challenges citizens face when developers want to locate these dangerous refineries near residential areas.

THE SWARM VERSUS BIG COAL

RECENT VICTORIES FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE AND MOTHER EARTH

Ted Nace is the director of coalSwarm, a San Francisco based group mobilizing nationwide support for the movement opposing new coal plants and supporting renewable energy and conservation. A former community organizer and entrepreneur, he founded Peachpit Press, a leading computer book publisher. He is the author or co-author of four books, including *Gangs of America: The Rise of Corporate Power and the Disabling of Democracy*.

In this talk, Ted Nace will describe the instrumental role played by a loose coalition of grassroots groups in blocking 59 proposed coal plants in 2007, why this powerful movement went largely unnoticed in the national media, and the factors that hint at even greater success for the movement in the coming years.

Following Ted's presentation, Dr. Kestas Bendinskas, Professor at SUNY Oswego and spokesperson for the Coalition of Responsible Citizens (opposed to TransGas in Scriba), and Sally Rock-Blake, graduate student at SUNY ESF, and Chair of JamPAC. (opposed to TransGas in Jamesville) will join him to discuss the status of the two Transgas power plants.

Speakers will then answer questions from the audience.

Forum Schedule

- 6 PM — doors open
- 6:10 — networking and exhibits
- 7:00 — speaker: **Ted Nace**
- 7:45 — question time
- 8:15 - visit displays and network
- 8:45 — take down tables for 9:00 PM close.

Table space is free but limited, so RSVP by May 15, to reserve space for your organization. Individual signups are also accepted.

Martha Loew: mloew@twcny.rr.com or 492-4745
Vicki Baker: vbaker002@twcny.rr.com or 469-5347
FORUM — PO Box 182, Jamesville, NY 13078

IROQUOIS GROUP CONTACT INFO

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SUBMIT ARTICLES BY THE 15TH OF THE
PRECEDING MONTH:
SIERRA.DEB@VERIZON.NET
SUBJECT LINE MUST BEGIN WITH IM

Did you know?

If we recycled the water bottles used in New York, we would save more than 67,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases.

WHY DON'T WOODPECKERS GET HEADACHES?

BOOK REVIEW

By MARTHA LOEW

As an avid backyard birder, I really enjoyed and learned from *Why Don't Woodpeckers Get Headaches? And Other Bird Questions You Know You Want To Ask*, by Mike O'Connor

Since 1983, the author runs Bird Watchers General Store on Cape Cod — maybe the first store in the US exclusively for Birds. After years of answering customer questions, he started a weekly birding column in the local newspaper to answer questions on backyard birding. This book is a compilation of a lot of his articles.

His great sense of humor is fun to read. You learn lots of facts about bird life, habits, and history. I learned about hurricanes and birds, tidal waves and birds and what to do for the poor robin when winter returns and freezes her worms.

I particularly enjoyed his pegging the Nuthatch as a Democrat: “they never seem to stop muttering to themselves as if they can't seem to figure out what to do next.” And this: “There is no sense in looking for them then.” O'Connor writes of the male wood duck, which begins to molt, losing his gorgeous colors and turning dull, while the female broods, “with all the political talk shows on TV, you do not need to see any more dull males.”

Mike O'Connor is *not* dull.

DID YOU MISS THESE EVENTS?

RECYCLING TOUR

If you squinted just right at the Recycle America tour on January 12, you could imagine a George Rhoads kinetic sculpture. Sierrans bobbed up and down the stairs and along the catwalks while conveyers, whisked mixed recyclables up inclines, over rotating screens, beneath magnets, through blowers and past laborers working at the frenzied pace of Charlie Chaplin in *Modern Times*. Sierrans emerged unchanged, while beside us neat bales of steel, aluminum, plastic, paper and corrugated popped out, ready for market.

This system of machines and humans makes single-stream recycling possible and lowers recycling costs by allowing haulers to buy similar compacter trucks for garbage and recyclables. To those of us who feel that compacters degrade materials more than divided trucks, Robert Comi explained that weather is more damaging and that modern paper mills are able to handle a mixed product anyway. The unconvinced were relieved to see that at least the best materials are often collected, shredded and delivered by specialized contractors thereby avoiding both weather and contamination.

SOLAR DESIGN

No matter how enticing those alternative energy gizmos look, Art Weaver insists, “*conserve first*”, then you can have solar panels “for dessert.” On January 30, Art compared one 6 KW installation that supplied only 10% of a home's electricity with several others, including a tiny 1.5 KW set-up that supplied 110% of the home's needs. What a difference conservation makes!

What we learned: Syracuse compares surprisingly well with Tucson, Arizona for the amount of sun received annually; that — incentives aside — solar hot water is a better choice than photovoltaics; and that mini wind power is a pipe dream for most of us because wind can be unreliable.

CHILI FEST

OK, we know paper plates are recyclable, but would you believe sparkling clear cups and sturdy forks? Each year we learn some surprising thing at our Chili Fest, but we were floored by these products. Debby Shanahan collected the soiled “dishes” for her compost bin and will share the results this summer.

Alan Fisher, a long-time member of the Iroquois Group of Sierra Club, passed away on January 8th. Alan was a devoted, passionate believer in protecting our world.

In addition to the needs of his extended family and despite a painful illness, Alan took charge of the Messenger mailings for many years.

We miss our good friend and Sierran.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Dear tree huggers,

(Be sure it is a tree you are hugging, not a bush.)

The weather gets lots of attention at this time of year. The groundhog says six more weeks of winter. Not much news because the calendar says seven more weeks of winter anyway, from February 2 to March 21. The red-winged blackbirds — dozens of them — in my back yard announced it was spring yesterday, March 8. Obviously dozens of feathered critters out-predict one furry one.

In my last letter I promised an update on recycled paper use in local and national publications. The only catalogue that rates "Best" (100% recycled, post-consumer) is Timberline Boots. All others have *zero*: LL-

Bean, Lands End, Vermont Country Store, Earthwatch.org, Sierra Trading Post.

Magazines and newspapers are a mixed bag. First place goes to *Center of Excellence*, *Co-op America*, and *Alaska Wilderness League*, at 100% recycled. Those with 80-100% are *Utne Reader*, *Ms*, *Environmental Defense*. Those with 30%-50% are *Audubon*, *Nature's Voice*, *Reflections*, *Conservationist*, *OCRRA*, *Sierra*. One with 0% is *Adirondac*.

Unfortunately most local group newsletters are in the zero-percent group. If you know otherwise, please write. Many support Sierra positions on most issues, so please if you get a newsletter that could do better, call or write and encourage them to save some trees.

At the bottom of the pile are the magazines that deceive by displaying a large recycle symbol and announcing either "recyclable" or "please recycle". Those include *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Consumer Reports*. A quick letter to the editors could make a difference.

Please let me know of any actions you take, and results.

Thanks for all you do,

For the earth and all the critters and trees.
Martha Loew

ENVIRONMENTAL DIGEST

PARTICIPATE IN EARTH HOUR

Pledge to turn off your lights from 8-9 pm on Saturday, March 29, 2008. During that hour, replace old light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) and commit to reducing energy consumption in the year ahead. <http://www.earthhour.org/>

MORE INFORMATION ON CFLS

The amount of mercury in a typical CFL is only 4 to 5 milligrams, and newer bulbs have even less. That's almost 1,000 times less than what used to be in mercury thermometers.

While you should avoid exposing yourself to any mercury, if a CFL breaks, the exposure the bulb is comparable to the mercury in a few cans of tuna. It would not be expected to cause ill effects.

NEWSBREAK ON RECYCLED PAPER

The Iroquois Group passed a resolution to aim for 100% recycled, post-consumer paper in our own publications. This resolution was also presented to the Atlantic Chapter for their publications. The first reactions were "too expensive, clogs up the machine" — the usual... Then the Publications Committee looked into it and found exactly what was needed. It was cheaper! So the proverbial win/win... The upcoming Sierra Atlantic will be on that paper.

YOUR VOTE WILL BE VERIFIABLE

Bo Lipari, the relentless champion of the right to have your vote count, seems to have won the battle. To avoid breaking in new program in such a big event, however, New Yorkers will keep the old lever machines through the presidential elections, after which the optical-scan, paper ballots will take over. But before you heave a sigh of relief, check out Bo's Blog: <http://www.nyvv.org/boblog/>

Counties Choose Paper Ballots Despite Court Ruling

Even though counties had the option, ordered by the Court, to choose DREs, they did not! This is a demonstration of the success of the work voting integrity advocates did educating the public, election commissioners and the media. In the end, the commissioners chose paper not because they had to, but because they wanted to. That's pretty huge and says a lot about how deep our success has been.

But, just like Yogi said, it ain't over til its over and friends. it ain't over yet.

Hurrah to **Linda DeStefano** for her tireless work on this issue.

HOLD THE OIL CHANGE

Quicky oil-change shops may urge us to change the oil in our vehicles every 3,000 miles. But most cars nowadays don't need changing that often. In fact, most manufac-

turers say you can go 7,000 miles without a problem. Ditto for that SUV, unless you really are starring in one of those TV ads and driving it hard and long over dusty roads.

What difference does it make? Consider this: each year California alone generates about 153 million gallons of used oil.

Outdoors (Continued from page 4)

RAMS GULCH — JUNE 8

Only a small fragment of this jewel remained after I-481 tore through last wild sections of the Onondaga Escarpment. Learn about what was lost. Because of the fragile condition of a section of this hike, attendance will be limited to 8 adults. Meet at 2PM on Rams Gulch Road. Rugged trail. **By reservation only**, from June 1 – 6. Debby: 315-446-1273.

CORPORATE CHALLENGE — JUNE 24

Save the date for the 26th Syracuse Chargers & JP Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge Race at Onondaga Lake Park. Volunteer to help Sierra Club meet the goal of 100% recycling for the event. **Contact Lisa Daly by June 3 at 428-1384 or email: ldaly@yahoo.com.**

SPRING EVENTS

Sierra Club Indoor and Outdoor events are all **educational or service programs** that encourage us to Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet. They are always FREE & OPEN TO EVERYBODY.

ExCom meetings — Sierra members only — on second Wednesdays at 7:00 PM. Locations vary. Call 492-4745. Come and bring your ideas.

INDOORS

Indoor programs are held the **last** Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM, at University United Methodist Church (UUMC), 1085 E. Genesee St. Park and enter on University Ave. Info: 492-4745.

HONEYWELL ON ONONDAGA LAKE — MARCH 26

Much has happened since the approval in 2007 of the **Honeywell cleanup plan** for Onondaga Lake. Honeywell scientists will give us updates on:

- Removal of contamination at the sources,
- Recycling of mercury,
- 45-foot barrier wall and remediation of the trapped water,
- Habitat restoration,
- Dredge and cap.

Come, learn and find out how to be part of our lake's restoration. Public participation is part of the plan.

ENERGY SYMPOSIUM — APRIL 11

The Fourth Annual Symposium *Energy in the 21st Century* at Cazenovia College will be held Friday, April 11, from 7:30AM to 4:00PM. Speakers include Tom De-Napoli, Pete Grannis, Kit Kennedy, and other experts on carbon trading, environ-

mental audits, RGGI, photovoltaic research, ethanol.

There will be trips to Wood Chip Ethanol Process, Fenner Wind Farm, Morrisville College Biodigester, and Fitzpatrick Nuclear Facility. Breakfast and lunch are included in this free package.

The symposium is sponsored by Cazenovia College and arranged by Rhea Jezer of the Iroquois Excom. Registration and information <http://www.cazenovia.edu/energy>

CHINA TRAVELOGUE — APRIL 30

Learn about China and its environmental issues from Dr. Gail Tooker, faculty member at SUNY Cortland. Her PowerPoint presentation will focus on her trip to China in June 2007, including observations of a second grade science class and an environmental center in the Beijing area during an academic tour to Capital Normal University in Beijing.

ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM — MAY 28

See page 1

OUTDOORS

Outdoor programs are usually on **Sundays at 2 PM** at various interesting locations. Info and cancellations: 492-4745.

SALMON RIVER FALLS — APRIL 20

Salmon River Falls Unique Area in Orwell has a breathtaking 110-foot waterfall and a spectacular river gorge. We will walk to see the falls and then drive to nearby Beecherville Rd. to hike for 3-4 miles. We will learn about a plantation forest mixed with second growth hardwood, running along a typical Tug Hill stream. Bring sturdy shoes, rain gear, water and snack. Meet at the parking lot at 1PM.

Directions: Take exit 36 off I-81. **From the south**, go east on 13, turn left onto county route 2A, and turn right onto Rt. 2 east to Orwell. **From the north**, take Rt. 2 east to Orwell.

Turn right onto 22 South at the Orwell Library and Town Hall (sign for Salmon River). Go 2.7 miles and turn left at sign for Salmon River onto Falls Road. Go 1.4 miles. The parking lot is on the right.

Rich Slingerland 315-298-3130, Adina Mulliken 315-443-9519 or pepperballmeow@yahoo.com. Carpool: Adina.

WOODCHUCK HILL — MAY 10

Join us at 2PM for a walk and trail maintenance at the Woodchuck Hill Field and Forest Preserve, a Save The County property (STC). The entrance to the Preserve is off Woodchuck Hill Rd, 1.6 miles east of Maple Drive and 0.5 miles west of route 92. Turn into the driveway at the STC sign and go to the end to park near the horse barn and the STC sign. Moderate trail.

<http://www.savethecounty.org/preserves.html>

BEACH CLEAN-UP — MAY 24

On Saturday, 10 AM, we meet for the annual clean-up of the beach at Southwick Beach on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario.

From Syracuse: Take I-81 N to exit 39, Rt 13 for Pulaski. Go west 4 miles to junction of Rt. 3. Turn right and go north 15 miles to Southwick Beach. Turn left into park. Go to the end of the campground on the beach. Bags will be furnished. Bring gloves, rain gear and lunch. Rich: 298-3130.

(Continued on page 3, col 3)



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