

Crossroads Group Sierra Club



SPRING/SUMMER 2024

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Crossroads' Balloonfest Refreshment Stand

The Crossroads Group will once again have its "world famous" refreshment stand at the annual Michigan Challenge Balloonfest in Howell. The dates are Friday, Saturday and Sunday, **June 28-30, with setup on Thursday, June 27.**

For many years, we have been serving up hotdogs, brats, veggie burgers, chips and a variety of cold drinks. The refreshment stand raises the money that allows us to bring so much value to our community. It funds all our programs, our outings, our newsletters and our conservation and political work.

But it does not happen without our Crossroads Group supporters! Refreshment stand volunteers get a free pass into the event and the opportunity to meet other members of the Sierra Club and learn what friendly and dedicated people we are!

We have shifts all weekend long to meet your schedule, and people often come early or stay late to enjoy the activities and spectacles surrounding the festival. One cannot say enough about the sight of dozens of hot air balloons lifting off into the summer sky...and there is no better vantage point than our booth, which overlooks the launch field. Friday night has the fireworks and Saturday night the balloon-glow.

The biggest reward is knowing that by giving only a few hours of your time you help make Crossroads Group a vital force for environmental leadership in our area. Suggested volunteer shifts are as follows but feel free to modify them as needed to fit your schedule.

Thursday setup, June 27: 6:30 PM-8 PM

Friday June 28: 1-4 PM, 3-7 PM, 5-9 PM, 6-10 PM

Sat. June 29: 10AM-2PM, 12-4 PM, 2-6 PM, 5-9 PM, 6-10 PM

Sunday June 30: 10AM-2PM, 2-6 PM, 5-9 PM

To Volunteer: Send your preferred times along with your name and phone number to: Crossroads.Sierraclub@gmail.com Volunteers will receive more details prior to the event.

For more info: Call Paul Thielking at 810-588-6077 or send an email to the address above.

Spring 2024 Lobby Day is May 15!

We need your help to make sure that water affordability and polluter accountability are priority issues that the House and Senate pass this spring! Sign up to be a part of our citizen lobby day on May 15th!

To sign up for Lobby Day, go to www.sierraclub.org/michigan and click the Legislative Action Center tab.

Crossroads Group Events

See our Meetup site <https://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group/> for more details about these outings and programs (including possible cancellations or changes) and to see details when we schedule future events. Meetup is free to join, and a great way to let us know who is attending each event and to allow us to communicate with our members and for you to communicate with us.

Green Guardians: Michigan Resource Professionals Protecting Our Environment – Wednesday May 15, 7 pm

Location: Brighton District Library: 100 Library Dr, Brighton

This free program will be presented by Bill Murphy from the Michigan Resource Stewards.

The Michigan Resource Stewards are a group of retired professionals with expertise in water quality, fisheries, forestry and other areas who now work with conservation groups to address important environmental issues such as Line 5 and Great Lakes Treaty Fishing Issues. Bill Murphy is a former DNR Conservation Officer who handled major investigations of environmental crimes.

Dog Hike at Lyon Oaks County Park - Sunday May 19, 10am

Location: 52221 Pontiac Trail, Wixom

Bring your furry friends along for this 2.5 mile hike in a lovely dog-friendly park.

Pinckney State Recreation Area Bird and Nature Hike - Saturday June 1, 10am

Location: Lakelands Trail crossing parking lot, Cedar Lake Rd, Pinckney

Join us on a scenic 2-3 mile nature hike through some beautiful wetlands in Pinckney State Recreation Area.

Detroit Dequindre Cut and Eastern Market Mural Urban Hike, plus lunch at VegFest - Sunday, June 2, 10am

Location: Dequindre Cut Parking Lot, Wilkins St, Detroit

Join us for a 4 mile urban hike through Detroit's Dequindre Cut and the murals of Eastern Market, followed by lunch at VegFest.

Rose Oaks County Park Hike – Saturday June 15, 10am

Location: Fish Lake Rd, Holly

Join our 3 to 5 mile hike at this Oakland County park on scenic trails and boardwalks.

Earth Day Fest 2024

On Saturday April 20, the Crossroads Sierra Club Group had a successful Earth Day Fest 2024 in downtown Brighton with the theme “Planet Over Plastics”. We were joined by several local groups who are equally committed to improving our planet: Huron Valley Sierra Club Group, Huron River Watershed Council, Livingston Land Conservancy, Friends of Highland State Recreation Area, Huron Valley Audubon, Hartland Nature Audubon Club, St Paul’s Episcopal Church, Brighton Chamber of Commerce, and Quartz and Company - a zero-waste, Earth-friendly store in Howell.

The highlight of the day was the kids tent where the children could make pine cone & peanut butter bird feeders, and received white pine seedlings to plant at home. St. Paul’s Episcopal handed out wildflower seed balls for everyone to help naturally beautify their yards. Earth Day Fest was kicked off with lawmakers and community leaders speaking of their commitment to the environment; we welcome their ongoing efforts. And finally, there were free samples of plant-based “meatballs” that were delicious and helped people understand that a full meat-free diet does not have to be a sacrifice.



Crossroads Sierra Club 2024 Election Overview

Curt Hamilton and Ginny Maturen, as your Crossroads Co-Political chairs, have begun planning for the 2024 election cycle. Our activities will be much the same as in 2022, with some added activities and expansion of previous activities.

Ginny has been busy soliciting volunteers to participate in various activities later in the summer: postcards, canvassing, phone calls, texting, yard signs, poll workers, etc.

During May and June, the Political-Conservation committee will be revising and creating Crossroads questionnaires for candidates seeking Sierra Club endorsement: Livingston County Commissioner and Township Trustee. Once Crossroads endorses a candidate, Ginny will submit it to the Michigan Chapter Sierra Club Political Committee for endorsement. If there are any candidates running in the August Primary, our election activities will begin accordingly.

As it becomes applicable, we will also support candidates in western Oakland County where some of our Crossroads members reside.

In early July, we will complete our Crossroads Sierra Club Election Plan followed by the Crossroads Sierra Club Coordinated Plan. These, too, will be submitted to the Michigan Chapter for compliance review. In late July and early August we will formally begin our volunteer activities.

If you have any questions, or if you would like to participate in any of the Crossroads Sierra Club activities, please contact us at cg.political@michigan.sierraclub.org or call Ginny (734-730-2947) or Curt (313-701-5560).

Pioneering a Healthier Future: The Case for Michigan's HOUSE BILL NO. 4083

By Jim Gilligan, owner of Snedcor: Michigan's Green Dry Cleaning and Laundry Pick Up & Delivery Service

Snedcor's Cleaners is a pioneer in eco-friendly textile care. In over four decades, Jim Gilligan has steered the company toward a 100% non-toxic cleaning solution approach. Based in Howell, Michigan, the company emphasizes convenience and environmental responsibility, offering pickup and delivery services that adhere strictly to green principles.

Here is Jim's perspective on phasing out PERC in dry cleaning:

In an era where environmental protection and public health are critical, Michigan is on the brink of a significant advancement with HOUSE BILL NO. 4083. Introduced on February 14, 2023, this groundbreaking legislation proposes to phase out the use of perchloroethylene (PERC) in dry cleaning operations by the end of 2028. Backed by an impressive roster of state representatives, it aims to address the environmental and health concerns associated with PERC, a solvent that has been the industry standard for decades.

Perchloroethylene is a volatile organic compound (VOC) widely used in dry cleaning. Despite its efficacy in removing stains, PERC's toxic properties have been linked to serious health issues, including cancer, neurological effects, and liver damage, as well as environmental degradation. The transition proposed by HOUSE BILL NO. 4083 is not just a regulatory step but would safeguard our communities and ecosystems.

Recent discussions have raised concerns about the feasibility and implications of moving away from PERC. Critics argue that alternatives remain unmatched by PERC's effectiveness in cleaning 'hard-to-clean' clothes. However, Snedcor is a company that phased out PERC in favor of the non-toxic GreenEarth cleaning solution in 2006. We've experienced firsthand that alternatives can perform as well as, if not better than, PERC.

In conclusion, the transition away from PERC is both necessary and achievable. With the support of environmental advocates, industry stakeholders, and the broader community, Michigan can set a precedent for environmental stewardship and public health protection. We urge all Sierra Club members and residents of Michigan to voice their support for HOUSE BILL NO. 4083, paving the way for a future free of toxic dry cleaning solvents.

Jim is a seasoned entrepreneur and a fervent advocate for sustainable living. His passion for the environment extends beyond his professional work, influencing his personal interests and community involvement.

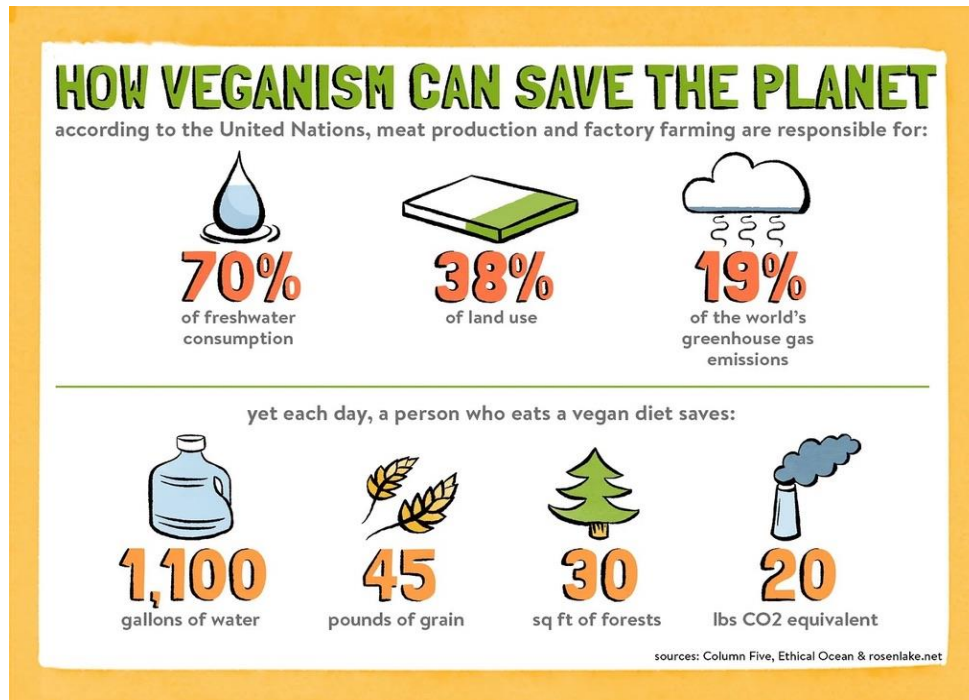
An articulate and knowledgeable speaker, Jim passionately shares his insights on the detrimental impact of fast fashion on our planet, advocacy for a return to quality, long-lasting garments and sustainable care practices.

Jim Gilligan and Snedcor's Cleaners represent a blend of entrepreneurial spirit, environmental stewardship, and community engagement, setting a standard for responsible business practices and personal excellence in the heart of Michigan.

See www.snedcors.com to learn more and sign up for service.

Power Your Plate: Choose Foods to Help the Planet, your Health, your Wallet, and Animals!

Switching to more plant-based foods is the quickest way to help the planet, as urged by more than 200 climate scientists in an April 2024 [Harvard report](#).



Healthy eating may be best achieved with a plant-based diet (which encourages whole, plant-based foods and discourages meats, dairy products, and eggs as well as all refined and processed foods). Per the [National Institute of Health](#), research shows that plant-based diets are cost-effective, low-risk interventions that may lower body mass index, blood pressure, HbA1C, and cholesterol levels, and may also reduce the number of medications needed to treat chronic diseases. To look up particular health questions, one of my first go to places is [NutritionFacts.org](#) which is where M.D. Michael Greger distills many scientific reports into English, with references to “put it to the test”. Two excellent documentaries you can stream for more about how plant-based eating makes you stronger, faster, and gives you the ability to prevent - or even reverse - heart disease, cancers, and anti-inflammatory diseases, check out [Code Blue Documentary](#) or [Game Changers](#).

Plant-based eating costs less than the Standard American Diet with meat, eggs, and dairy per the [National Institute of Health](#). Savings estimates vary from 16% to 29% according to different reports from the National Institutes of Health.

And not least of all, animals grown in Concentrated Animal Farm Operations (CAFOs) provide the worst lives for animals and produce suspect quality of food. The majority of people get their meat, eggs and dairy from CAFOs. The 3 page [Sierra Club Grassroots Network Food and Agriculture Team/National CAFO Sub-team’s August 2023 report](#) outlines the stress placed on animals in intensive confinement, high levels of disease transmission, mutilations, barn fires, explosions, heat strokes, mass suffocations, and overall suffering animals endure.

So what to eat, what to do? Take VegMichigan’s [30 day pledge](#) to add more plant-based/vegan meals to your routine, focus your meals around whole grains, fruits, vegetables, beans, greens, nuts, and seeds - and get The Friendly Vegan Cookbook to help you get started. Focus more on “adding in” instead of “cutting out” by only learning new plant-based recipes - the more new things you try, the more new foods you will find to love, as talked about at [Vegan.com](#). And, check out [MinimalistBaker.com](#) and [ItDoesntTasteLikeChicken.com](#) for many great tips and recipes.

See our website www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads for an electronic copy of this article with links.

-- Terri Wilkerson

All That Glitters

“All that glitters is not gold,” wrote William Shakespeare. And how prescient he was: Glitter today is a mix of plastic and aluminum.

These sticky, scintillating specks appear in wrapping paper, holiday decorations, greeting cards, craft projects, and even personal cosmetics. Almost anything that sparkles likely contains plastic-based glitter. Since glitter particles are so small, they’re considered microplastics: a major source of ocean, air, and soil pollution.

If the thought of giving up glitter altogether seems untenable, consider newly created biodegradable glitters. These teeny flecks use plant-based fibers, made using modified regenerated cellulose often sourced from eucalyptus trees, as an alternative to plastic sheets. Other biodegradable materials include mica (a naturally occurring silicate mineral) and synthetic mica. Bioglitter touts itself as the world’s only certified freshwater biodegradable glitter brand. And the global leader in glitter production, Meadowbrook Inventions, now sells biodegradable glitter.

Addressing the glitter issue is a “small” way of getting the “big” issue across.

--Jim Williams

Getting Involved in Crossroads

The Crossroads Group of the Sierra Club is a dynamic organization serving Livingston County and western Oakland County. We are dynamic because our leadership team is large and diverse and committed to protecting the environment. We warmly welcome all newcomers who soon learn that they are among friends who work together to make our community a better place to live. Below you will learn about some of the things we do and opportunities for involvement.

Conservation Committee of The Crossroads Group.

The focus of the Conservation Committee is addressing local environmental issues such threats that come from oil and gas pipelines, new aggregate mines and PFAS contamination. We also advocate for things such as expanded transportation options and expanded parklands.

Being a committee member involves monthly Zoom meetings to discuss and strategize on issues the Group is working on. Committee members may bring up new issues that they are familiar with or concerned about, for discussion. It also involves participating in actions that the committee decides to undertake. This at times means assisting local community groups in their environmental activism. Our work is only limited by the volunteer capacity of the committee!

Political Committee of The Crossroads Group.

The focus of the Political Committee is getting environmentally friendly candidates elected to office and supporting environmentally friendly legislation.

Being a committee member involves monthly Zoom meetings to discuss and strategize on current issues. Activities can include vetting candidates and making recommendations about endorsement to the Crossroads Group Executive Committee, and then on to the Michigan Chapter for final consideration. If an endorsement is completed, the committee works on strategies to help endorsed candidates get elected. Committee members are also encouraged to attend lobby days organized by the Michigan Chapter.

Outings Committee of The Crossroads Group.

The focus of the Outings Committee is to fulfill the first two parts of the Sierra Club motto- *Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet*- in hopes that it will encourage the third part as well.

Our team plans and leads a variety of outings such as hikes, bike rides, boating trips and service events. We usually meet by Zoom but occasionally in person to plan outings. We typically hold two or more outings per month. At every outing, we need at least two leaders - one to lead, and one to sweep.

Members of the committee lead the outings by taking charge of the logistics, welcoming all participants and providing a bit of Crossroads background. For people who don't feel comfortable leading the outings, we can always use "sweepers" - people who stay at the back to help out.

Other Ways to Get Involved in the Crossroads Group

In addition to the above committees, there are other opportunities to find a home with Crossroads. We have a membership committee, a program committee and a newsletter team that may be of interest to you. Many people join our leadership team without becoming part of a committee. This is also a rewarding way to get involved. If you are interested, please email us at crossroads@michigan.sierraclub.org with your name and phone number so that we may contact you. We'd be happy to answer all questions. If you join the team, you will make new friends and help us build a better community.



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