



THE LOOKOUT

Huron Valley Group
Vol. 30 No.2 Spring 2008



Grow Locally, Eat Locally

Plant a Row for the Hungry

By now you've probably heard the reports that Americans are going hungry (NY Times, March 31, 2008). In Michigan one in EIGHT people currently receives food stamps - twice as many as in 2000. Mostly, it's related to fuel prices, directly or indirectly, and the rising cost of food, which is related to fuel prices and the push to grow corn to put in our gas tanks. I'm going to leave off the rant about these "whys" for now and get back to the bit about **people going hungry**.

These are not bad people or stupid people. They're just hungry. Groceries - and especially healthy foods - somehow seem "optional" when the bank suddenly asks for another \$200/month and it now costs you a day's wages to drive to work each week.

So what are we going to do to help? Our money's not going as far these days either, so it's hard to find cash for charity. But there is another way! Food Gatherers, Washtenaw County's award-winning food shelter, accepts donations of unblemished garden produce, which it then distributes to over 100 charities in the county. **I therefore suggest all gardeners join the Plant a Row for the Hungry Campaign.** This project was started several years ago by members of the Garden Writers' Association, and now has branches all over the US. The idea is simple: when you're planning your garden, plant an extra row of crops destined for a local food shelter. It's not that much more work for you (and gardening is *fun*, right?) and someone else gets to **take vegetables home from the food bank instead of Mac-n-cheese.**

In Ann Arbor, take your food to **Food Gatherers**. This is the central clearinghouse for literally hundreds of non-profit food-distribution agencies in Washtenaw County - and something like 120 of them have the facilities to handle fresh produce. If you're in the Detroit/SE Michigan area, I believe **Gleaners Community Food Bank** takes produce. To find a

food bank in another area, try the food bank locator at www.seconddharvest.org.

Plan to plant crops that are nutrient-dense and easy to transport: hard squash (like butternut), potatoes, broccoli, cabbage, greens (kale, collards, chard), carrots, peppers, beets, green beans, and apples. Tomatoes, alas, are too squishy and zucchini aren't all **that** nutritious, so they are not preferred...though I doubt they'd turn it down completely.

I'm setting a personal goal of 200 lb. of food to go to Food Gatherers this year. OK, close your slack jaws and listen to my reasoning here: five butternut squash plants should produce about 100 lb. of squash in about 15 square feet of good garden soil, if last year's yields are any indication. I'm going to try growing potatoes on a fairly large scale this year, and they can yield 1-2 lb. per square foot. Add to that some Swiss chard (which always grows faster than I can eat it) and all those pole beans I'm growing to enrich the soil, and I think I can reach 200 lb. and still have plenty of produce for my household.

What do you think? Will you grow an extra bit of something - a row of beans, an extra squash plant, some potatoes instead of more lettuce - and take it to the food bank? Set yourself a goal, in servings perhaps. **How many servings of vegetables do you think you could spare this year?** I guarantee the recipient of your fresh produce will be grateful.



By Emily Springfield



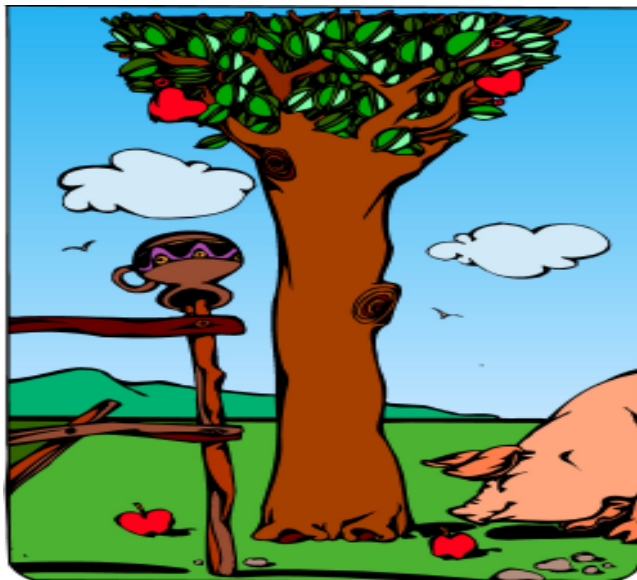
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Local continued from page 1.
Organic Pork and Apples – A Natural Pairing

Pork and apples go together like...pork and apples! Pork chops and applesauce, pork loin and baked apples, roast pork and sautéed apples, potatoes and cabbage stir-fried with ham and tart green apples. But local organic apple orchards are re-discovering an even older pairing: hogs and apple orchards.

Apple Schram orchards, run by Jane Bush near Charlotte, and AlMar Orchards, run by Jim Koan in Flushing, have long supplied southeast Michigan with organic apples and cider. Recently, both orchards have started raising hogs in conjunction with the apple orchards.

In February, I spoke with Jane Bush about this pairing. It turns out that hogs are fantastic pest control, and apple-fed hogs taste wonderful! A couple times a year, the pigs are let into the orchard to clean up fallen apples. This is especially important during the summer after the “June drop” - the natural thinning of the unripe fruits. The fallen apples can harbor the plum curculio, an immensely destructive weevil that’s the bane of orchardists. The pigs play a critical role in keeping the trees healthy by eating the fallen apples - helping eliminate the need for pesticides.



In March, James Pritchard of the Associated Press picked up the story of using hogs in organic apple farming. He did his story specifically on Jim Koan at AlMar Orchards, and the research they’re doing into the efficiency of the

technique. The hogs ate 98% of the fallen apples, digesting the plum curculio larvae along with the apples. For all we think of this as a “new” technique, Koan remembers that his grandfather always let the hogs into the orchard to eat fallen apples.

“I think if my granddad was alive today and he saw how excited I am about doing this and this information that we’re gaining on this,” said Koan, “he would just look at me and say, ‘Jeez, you’re stupid. You didn’t know that?’”

When they’re not in the orchard, the pigs are moved into fresh pasture every day, so they don’t stay long enough to tear up the soil too much or overgraze. Their favorite food is red clover, from sprouts to flowers. Jane Bush also plants turnips, which the pigs root up in their natural foraging behavior. All apple pulp left over from cider making goes to the hogs. They also get some grain (soaked for a few days first) to supplement their forage diet. The spelt and rye are grown by Apple Schram; non-GMO (genetically modified organism) corn comes from a neighbor.

The hogs are processed in a USDA-inspected facility near Battle Creek. No nitrates, MSG, or other additives are used. Bush doesn’t sell a myriad of cuts - mostly chops, hams, bacon (smoked but not cured), and sausage.

And oh, let me tell you about the sausage! It is truly divine. My favorite is the bratwurst, which has black pepper and fennel, and she also makes hot and sweet Italian sausage and 1/4 lb. sausage patties. Jane tells me there are a couple reasons why her sausage is so good: first, it’s “whole-hog” sausage, meaning she makes it with really good cuts of meat, not just leftovers. All those loins, roasts, and such go right into the sausage. But the real secret is the hogs’ diet. All that fresh food, and especially the apples, give the pork a richness that can’t be matched by industrially-raised pork.

So, want to get your own? Here are a few Michigan places to look:

- ◆ Year around Saturdays 8 am-2 pm, Lansing City Market
- ◆ May-Oct Saturdays 8 am-2 pm Meridian Farmers’ Market, Okemos
- ◆ Wed 2:30 pm-6:30 pm Allen St. Farmers’ Market, Lansing
- ◆ People’s Food Co-op, Ann Arbor
- ◆ Arbor Farms Natural Foods, Ann Arbor

The Huron Valley Group Newsletter is published 4 times a year by Huron Valley Group, Michigan Chapter, Sierra Club, 621 Fifth Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

A couple of interesting final notes:

◆ The name “Apple Schram” is a family name - Jane’s mother’s maiden name was Schram, and she bought her orchard from an uncle nearly 20 years ago. Remember - “Schram” rhymes with “ham”!

◆ Jane Bush is also the organizer behind the Michigan egg cooperative Grazing Fields, also available at the Ann Arbor Food Co-op, among other places. I’m really impressed with the extent of community Jane has built in this region. She’s given strength and options to Southern Michigan farmers through cooperative distribution systems, opening new markets, and raising awareness of the food treasures grown right here. Thanks, Jane.



Local spring recipe

Early spring can be a hard time of year to find local foods. Stores of winter new crops are just barely sprouting. This tasty local treat, however, can be made of ingredients that you should be able to find near you.

1 lb. white potatoes, sliced thin
1 bunch fresh greens

Common at grocery stores
Try spinach or braising mix from Brines Farms (Ann Arbor Farmers’ Market) or chickweed, garlic mustard, or dandelions from your yard!

1 TBS butter or oil

Thumb Oilseed Producers sells non-GM Michigan soybean oil. Look for it next time you’re near Frankenmuth!

1 TBS flour

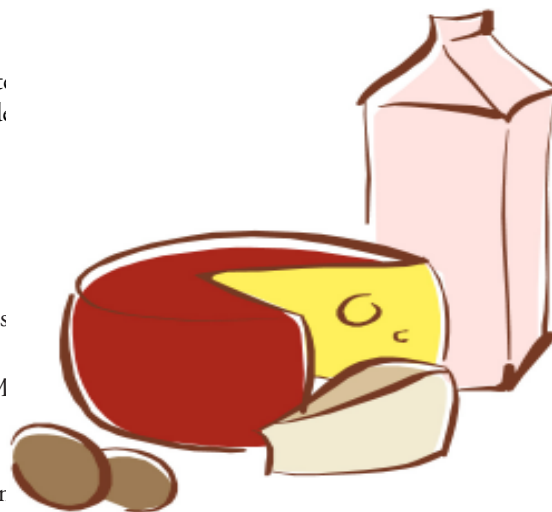
Westwind Milling or Ferris Organic Farr

1 c. milk or soy milk

Try Guernsey or Calder dairies, or Eden brand soy milk (grown and made in Michigan)

1 c. shredded cheese

Try any of the Rosewood cheddars (Ann Arbor food co-op, Arbor Farms), Williams and Amish Country Cheeses (Wal-Mart and other large groceries), or for something fancier, Boulevard Market in Tecumseh



Layer the potatoes and greens in a baking dish.

Melt the butter in a saucepan and stir in the flour.

Stir in the milk and simmer until thickened.

Add the cheese (and salt and pepper to taste) and stir over low heat until the cheese melts.

Pour the sauce over the potatoes and greens, cover, and bake for 30-40 minutes in a 350° oven until the potatoes are almost cooked through.

Uncover and bake until potatoes are tender and top is browned, about 10 more minutes.

Emily Springfield is a self-professed treehugger who lives west of Ann Arbor. She writes a local food blog called Eat Close to Home at eatclosetohome.wordpress.com. For links to this blog and more, visit the Sierra Club Huron Valley Group’s website, www.michigan.sierraclub.org/huron.

Aged and Ripened...But Still Green: Part II

Easy Steps to Saving Hundreds on Your Energy Bills

By Kelly and Matthew Grocoff

Green home renovations are not just a passing phase. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, our homes use 21% of the energy consumed in the U.S., and home energy costs have skyrocketed to an average of \$3,800 per year. In the near future, all homes will be built green. But, the average age of an American home is now over 30 years. That's a lot of room for energy efficiency improvements. Every year that energy prices rise, and they certainly will, investments in efficiency get better and better. 'Greenovations' are simply the best way to future-proof your home and make it more comfortable and affordable today.

When renovating our 107-year-old home, we divided our process into four parts: 1. energy (reduction & production), 2. water efficiency, 3. materials and resources, and 4. indoor environmental quality. These are not separate categories, but rather integrated parts of the whole which must be considered together. For the biggest bang for the carbon buck, we begin with energy efficiency. Later, in Part 3 of this series, we'll discuss water, materials and indoor environment.

Green Bling vs. Reduce then Produce

When considering cost-saving (and human species-saving) energy efficiency improvements, most of us immediately begin thinking about the shiniest, newest, most visible things that everyone is talking about - the "green bling": solar panels, wind turbines, and a Prius in the driveway. While these are all simple and available technologies that must be adopted as soon as possible, reducing the energy load is much more affordable and is an essential first step.

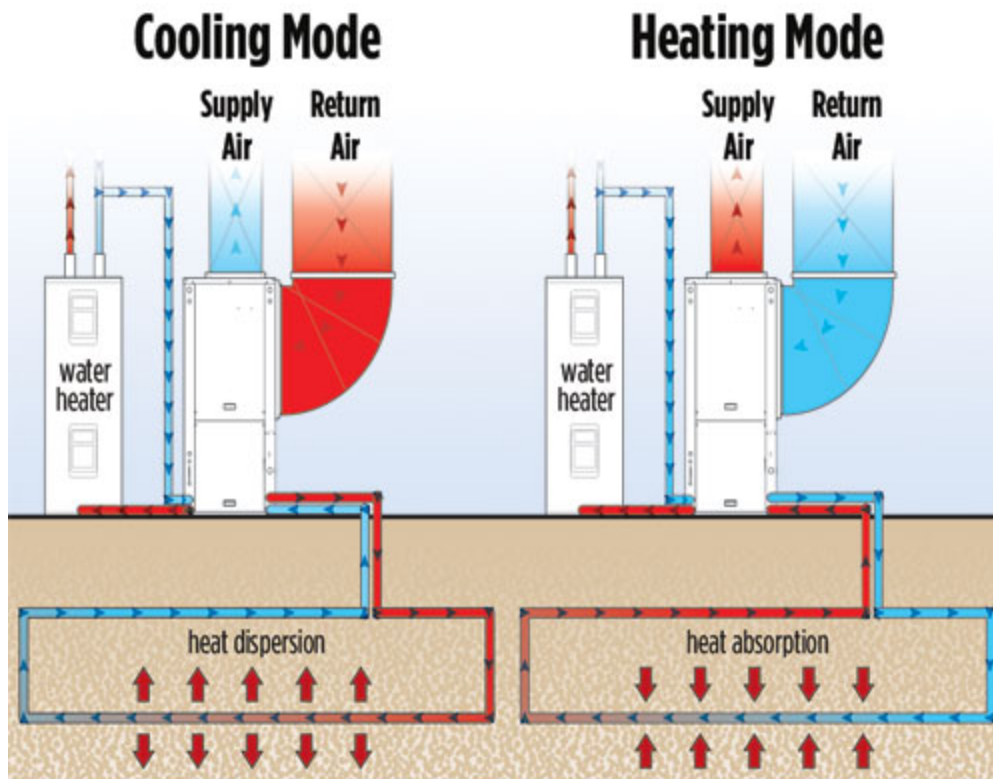
Reduce then produce. Any target of net-zero energy use from the grid must begin by reducing your load. As has been said many times, "efficiency is the cheapest power plant in the world." Once we reduce our load as much as possible, then we can look for sustainable renewable resources to produce what is needed for the remaining load.

Before considering the green bling and that new geothermal or solar thermal system, we knew we had to tighten up the house. Taking the following steps to reduce your load will make your home immediately

more comfortable, lower your energy costs (no matter what system you currently have), and make it less expensive for you when it comes time to bring in the bling. Step 1: Consider an energy audit, Step 2: Find and seal air leaks, Step 3: Insulate, Step 4: Consider sealing and improving old windows (not necessarily buying new).

Energy Audit

Using sophisticated technologies like infrared cameras or blower door pressure tests, a professional energy auditor can help you find where your house is performing poorly and recommend affordable changes. The reasonable fee they charge will pay



How it works: Geothermal heat transfer. See www.Michigan.Sierraclub.org/huron for a color version of this diagram.

for itself quickly if you follow their recommendations.

You can also try an easy do-it-yourself air leak test. On a very cold day, we took a lighted incense stick and waved it close to our doors, basement joists, windows and upstairs ceiling fixtures. We could see the air changes in the blowing pattern of the smoke. The bigger the gap, the more the smoke moved. These were all air leaks that we needed to fix.

This little trick will only tell you about air gaps. It won't tell you how well your home's walls and attic are insulated. For us it was easy, our attic was insulated with one layer of newspaper from 1902. We didn't need an infrared test to know that there was room for improvement. (Learn more - go to www.EnergyStar.gov and click on "Home Energy Audits" under the "Home Improvement" tab.)

Are You Leaving A Window Open All Winter Long?

Up to 30-50% of home energy costs come from heat loss! Tiny gaps around things like your windows, doors, vents, and light fixtures are the single biggest cause of home heating and cooling loss. All those tiny cracks and gaps can add up to 10 sq ft or more. That's like leaving a window or door wide open all winter long!

Depending on the size and location of the gap, you can use caulk or a foam sealant, such as Great Stuff. Before insulating our attic with blown cellulose, we hunted around for every possible air gap around the chimney, light fixtures that opened to the attic, and wall seams, and sealed them tight with spray foam. If your attic has spray foam insulation, this step is not necessary.

Next we tightened up the windows by caulking around the frames and using rope caulk (\$5.77 at Lowe's) to seal gaps in between the double-hung windows.

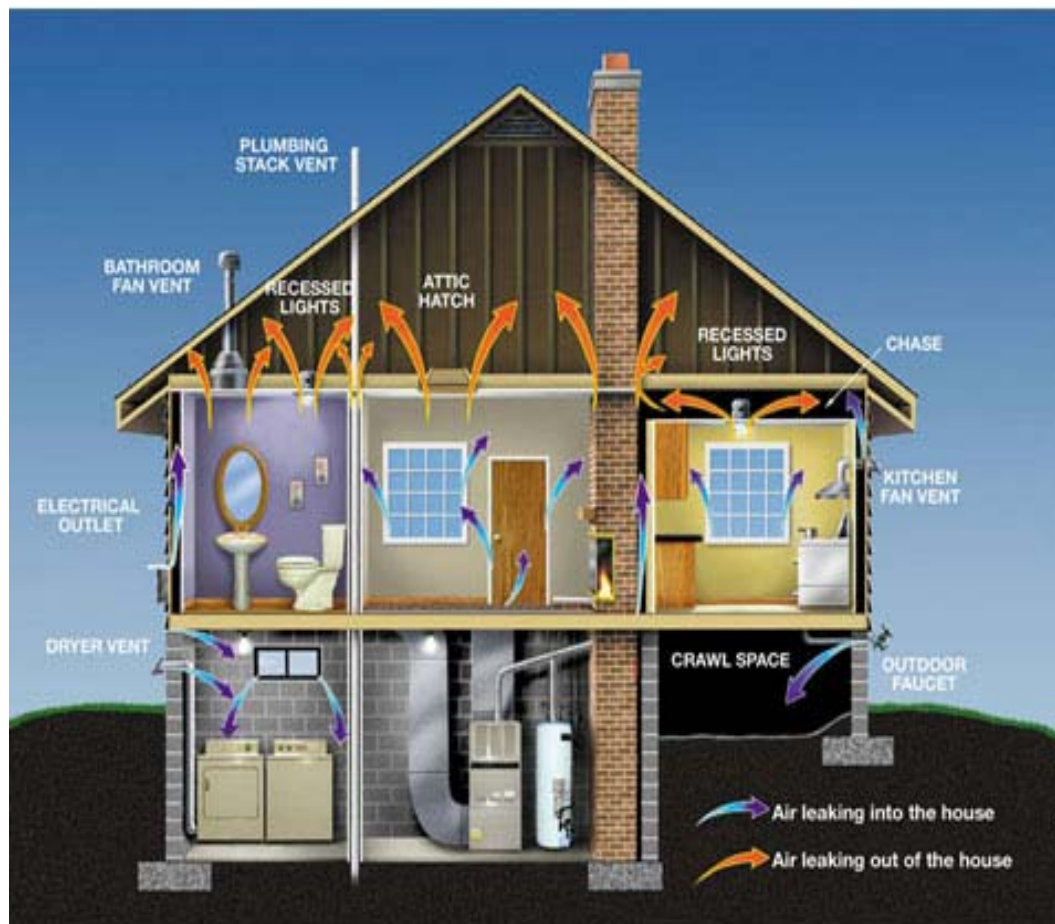
The rope caulk can be easily removed and is reusable. This is a temporary solution but works like a charm. Further, adding exterior storm windows can be nearly as effective as replacing older windows with new ones.

And of course, we made sure we had new weatherstripping around all doors to prevent that blast of air that finds its way under the doors.

For even deeper efficiency, we made sure our geothermal contractor followed code and sealed and insulated all our ducts. According to Energy Star, sealing and insulating ducts can improve heating and cooling system efficiency by 20 per cent — and sometimes much more!

A Warm Cozy Blanket for Your House

Now that we've zipped up our jacket, we're ready for a warm blanket to wrap around the house. There are great benefits to both blown cellulose and spray foam insulation. Your wall type, current insulation type, and budget will all be considerations when choosing insulation. In our attic and walls we went with blown cellulose, made from recycled newspaper. Farmer's



Common Air Leaks

From <http://www.energystar.gov/>

Insulation was able to cleanly remove some of the original wood siding and blow the insulation from the outside of the house, without damaging the historical integrity of the siding.

Basement joists are among the worst offenders for heat and air loss. We chose Arbor Insulation to fill all cavities between the foundation and first floor with open-cell spray foam. This provided both an excellent air seal for all those nasty gaps, as well as a significant thermal barrier to hold the heat in the basement. Be sure to *avoid* using any foam insulation that contains ureaformaldehyde, or cellulose insulation that uses aluminum or ammonium sulfate instead of boric acid as a fire retardant.

Lights Are On . . . But Nobody's Home

Lighting accounts for 12% of home energy consumption. As much as 60% of lighting costs are for empty rooms. So, first we replaced all lights with compact fluorescent bulbs. This gives us a huge savings each year in electricity and long-term savings for having to change the bulb only every 5 years.

Next, we installed Wattstopper motion sensor light switches throughout the house. These turn lights off automatically when the room is empty. Wattstoppers cost a bit more, but pay for themselves in a short time.

Digging Deep for Energy Efficiency - Bring in the Bling!

Heating and cooling can burn half of your energy dollars each year. When we moved into our folk-Victorian home, the circa-1957 Mueller Climatrol gas furnace operated at about 40% efficiency. For every energy dollar we paid to the utility company, 60 cents went out the chimney and only 40 cents went to heat the house.

We carefully did the math on options like solar thermal heating, photovoltaic panels (solar electric), solar domestic hot water, and other high efficiency heating and cooling systems. The hands-

down winner for us was geothermal. For every \$1 we spend on electricity to run the geothermal, we get \$4 worth of heat in the house - making our system 400% efficient. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency calls geothermal "the most energy-efficient, environmentally friendly heating and cooling technology available." It provides heating, cooling and hot water all in one hyper-efficient system.

We can hear you asking "but isn't it really expensive?" We believe that it is *more* expensive *not* to install geothermal - both to your pocket book and the environment. Our *annual* heating, cooling and hot water bill is projected to be only \$523! Yes, our geothermal system cost several thousand dollars more in initial costs compared to far less efficient Energy Star heater, air conditioner and hot water heater. But, by working the cost of our geothermal into our mortgage when we purchased the home, the additional capital cost is only \$45 per month.

We're proud to report that we had an immediate positive cash flow when we turned on the system last year. In February 2007, prior to installing geothermal, our heating bill was \$340. In February 2008, our bill was only \$100.

To learn more about our geothermal system, feel free to visit our website www.GreenovationTV.com and visit our new blog page. Feel free to post any questions or comments you may have.

What's next?

Now that we've reduced our energy consumption by more than half, we are exploring the options for producing our remaining energy with renewable resources such as solar electric and even small vertical wind turbines. Someday, we hope to see every home producing some of its own energy. In the meantime, let's all do what we can to tighten our homes as best we can. And don't forget to turn out the lights.

Kelly & Matt Grocuff live in Ann Arbor's historic Old West Side in a 107-year-old home that is becoming more and more "green" all the time. See Matt's blog on www.greenovationTV.com for lots more green remodeling tips, information on local contractors, and resources.

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Sierra Club—Huron Valley Group Calendar

Participants in Sierra Club outings will be asked to sign a liability waiver. If you wish to read the waiver before coming to an outing please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/> or call 415-977-5630. When carpooling is used to facilitate logistics for an outing, participants assume the risks associated with this travel, as well. Carpooling, ridesharing and the like are strictly a private arrangement among participants. Park fees may apply.

For up to date information, visit our website at <http://www.michigan.sierraclub.org/huron/>

IMPORTANT! All hikes carpool from Ann Arbor City Hall parking lot (N. 5th Ave. at E. Huron) unless otherwise stated.

Like nature? You could become a volunteer hike leader! The Sierra Club Huron Valley Group is accepting new volunteer outings leaders to lead short day hikes in and around Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti. We will reimburse you for American Red Cross basic first aid training. You will first go on the outing that you choose, and then lead that outing on a later date - or propose your own ideas! Great for your résumé, good company, exercise, and fun! Call Kathy Guerreso at 734-677-0823 for information on how to get started.

Sunday June 1, 2008. Pinckney State Recreation Area Hike with guest hike leader Barry Lonik. 1:00 pm. 3-4 mile hike among the hills of Pinckney Rec Area. Family-friendly. Meet at Ann Arbor City Hall at 1:00 pm. to carpool, or at the Rec Area at 1:30. Call Kathy Guerreso at 734-677-0823 for details.

Wednesday June 4, 2008. Executive Committee Meeting, typically first Wednesday of each month, 7:15 pm. Contact Doug Cowherd (doug.cowherd@michigan.sierraclub.org) for location.

Sunday June 8, 2008. Inner City Outings. 7:00 pm, 2nd Sunday of every month. Inner City Outings introduces urban children in Washtenaw County to outdoor and environmental experiences that might not otherwise be available to them. Interested chaperones, sponsors, planners, and contributors are always welcome. For meeting location and more details, please visit ico.sierraclub.org/washtenaw or contact Vera at 734-665-8118.

Tuesday June 10, 2008. Sierra Club Book Club. 7:30 pm, 2nd Tuesday of every month at Nicola's Books in Westgate Shopping Center, corner of Maple and Jackson, Ann Arbor. Book: **Trespassing: Dirt Stories and Field Notes**, by Janet Kauffman — short fiction and essays that illustrate the impact of modern factory farms on a rural Michigan community. Join us for discussion - all are welcome. Check the Ann Arbor Observer or call Nancy Shiffler at 734-971-1157 for details.

Tuesday June 17, 2008. HVG Monthly Public Program. 7:30 pm, 3rd Tuesday of every month at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor. Topic: **Great Lakes For Sale: How We Are Losing Control of Our Most Valuable Resource**, with Dave Dempsey, author of the books *On the Brink: The Great Lakes in the 21st Century* and *Great Lakes for Sale: From Whitecaps to Bottlecaps*. Non-members welcome; refreshments provided.

Monday June 23, 2008. Conservation Committee meeting. 7:00 pm, typically 4th Monday of every month. Contact Dorothy Nordness at DorothyK@isr.umich.edu or 734-668-6306 for location.

Wednesday July 2, 2008. Executive Committee Meeting, typically first Wednesday of each month, 7:15 pm. Contact Doug Cowherd (doug.cowherd@michigan.sierraclub.org) for location.

Tuesday July 8, 2008. Sierra Club Book Club. 7:30 pm, 2nd Tuesday of every month at Nicola's Books in Westgate Shopping Center, corner of Maple and Jackson, Ann Arbor. Book: **At Home on the Earth: Becoming Native to Our Place**, edited by David Landis Barnhill — a collection of writing about landscapes and the people who inhabit them. Join us for discussion - all are welcome. Check the Ann Arbor Observer or call Nancy Shiffler at 734-971-1157 for details.

Sierra Club—Huron Valley Group Calendar continued

Sunday July 13, 2008. Inner City Outings. 7:00 pm, 2nd Sunday of every month. Inner City Outings introduces urban children in Washtenaw County to outdoor and environmental experiences that might not otherwise be available to them. Interested chaperones, sponsors, planners, and contributors are always welcome. For meeting location and more details, please visit ico.sierraclub.org/washtenaw or contact Vera at 734-665-8118.

Tuesday July 15, 2008. HVG Monthly Public Program. 7:30 pm, 3rd Tuesday of every month at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor. Topic: **Sailing and Wind-surfing Local Lakes**, with Barry Lonik. Non-members welcome; refreshments provided.

July 21-25, 2008. Isle Royale Backpack Trip. This is still one of the most remote areas in Michigan. The natural beauty of this island is an absolute pleasure. Limit 10 people. Some group equipment can be provided. Contact Nancy Shiffler at 734-971-1157 for details, trip cost, and registration.

Monday July 28, 2008. Conservation Committee meeting. 7:00 pm, typically 4th Monday of every month. Contact Dorothy Nordness at DorothyK@isr.umich.edu or 734-668-6306 for location.

Wednesday August 6, 2008. Executive Committee Meeting, typically first Wednesday of each month, 7:15 pm. Contact Doug Cowherd (doug.cowherd@michigan.sierraclub.org) for location.

Sunday August 10, 2008. Inner City Outings. 7:00 pm, 2nd Sunday of every month. Inner City Outings introduces urban children in Washtenaw County to outdoor and environmental experiences that might not otherwise be available to them. Interested chaperones, sponsors, planners, and contributors are always welcome. For meeting location and more details, please visit ico.sierraclub.org/washtenaw or contact Vera at 734-665-8118.

Tuesday August 12, 2008. Sierra Club Book Club. 7:30 pm, 2nd Tuesday of every month at Nicola's Books in Westgate Shopping Center, corner of Maple and Jackson, Ann Arbor. Book: **The Appeal**, by John Grisham — Grisham's latest novel, about a toxic dumping court case and intrigue on the Mississippi Supreme Court. Join us for discussion - all are welcome. Check the Ann Arbor Observer or call Nancy Shiffler at 734-971-1157 for details.

Tuesday August 19, 2008. HVG Monthly Public Program. 7:30 pm, 3rd Tuesday of every month at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor. Topic: **TBA**. Non-members welcome.

Monday August 25, 2008. Conservation Committee meeting. 7:00 pm, typically 4th Monday of every month. Contact Dorothy Nordness at DorothyK@isr.umich.edu or 734-668-6306 for location.

Wednesday September 3, 2008. Executive Committee Meeting, typically first Wednesday of each month, 7:15 pm. Contact Doug Cowherd (doug.cowherd@michigan.sierraclub.org) for location.

Tuesday September 9, 2008. Sierra Club Book Club. 7:30 pm, 2nd Tuesday every month at Nicola's Books in Westgate Shopping Center, corner of Maple and Jackson, Ann Arbor. Book: **TBD**. Join us for discussion - all are welcome. Check the Ann Arbor Observer or Nancy Shiffler at 734-971-1157.

Sunday September 14, 2008. Inner City Outings. 7:00 pm, 2nd Sunday of every month. Inner City Outings introduces urban children in Washtenaw County to outdoor and environmental experiences that might not otherwise be available to them. Interested chaperones, sponsors, planners, and contributors are always welcome. For meeting location and more details, please visit ico.sierraclub.org/washtenaw or contact Vera at 734-665-8118.

Tuesday September 16, 2008. HVG Monthly Public Program. 7:30 pm, 3rd Tuesday every month at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor. Topic **TBA**. Non-members welcome.

Monday September 22, 2008. Conservation Committee meeting. 7:00 pm, typically 4th Monday of every month. Contact Dorothy Nordness at DorothyK@isr.umich.edu or 734-668-6306 for location.

Off the Beaten Path: Historic Charismatic Megafauna

It's hard to imagine that just a couple hundred years ago, our local landscape was a vast wilderness. Old growth woods stocked with giant trees populated most upland areas; some uplands were more open park-like expanses with prairie plants and scattered trees called oak savannahs; the uplands were interspersed with wetlands, some of which were several square miles in extent; lakes and ponds dotted the land; and rivers and streams meandered through it all, lined with more giant trees (and full of giant fish like lake sturgeon, lake trout and muskellunge, but that's another article!). All that botanical diversity provided a variety of habitats that attracted and supported a dazzling array of critters small and large. This article will focus on the latter, what have been referred to as "charismatic megafauna," many of which no longer roam the 'hood.

Historical accounts and evidence indicates that virtually all large mammals present in Michigan and surrounding areas were extant in southeast Michigan to one degree or another, or during particular seasons. A great reference for such information is the gigantic *Michigan Mammals* by Rollin Baker (Michigan State University Press, 1983, 642 pages!) which gives descriptions of every mammal known to inhabit the state before and after the European biped invasion. For each animal there are sections on the origin of its name (both common and Latin), a physical description, size and weight, distinctive cranial and dental characteristics, distribution, habitat preferences, density and movements, behavior, associates, reproductive activities, food habits, enemies, parasites and diseases, color aberrations, economic importance, and Michigan county records. There's also a map of the state with counties indicating current distribution, historic reported sightings, and likely pre-settlement distribution.

We've become so accustomed to the largest wild animal in our midst being the cutesy pest **white-tailed deer** (*Odocoileus virginianus*); they were also abundant in pre-settlement times in the southern half of the lower peninsula. Deer thrived in the open forest and attendant swamps, but that habitat was shared with several larger ungulates. **Elk** (*Cervus elaphus*) were quite common; the French explorer Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac reported them in the Detroit area about 1700. Cadillac also reported seeing **moose** (*Alces alces*) in Detroit in that time frame; the Erie-Saginaw interlobate of our area featured enough marshes to support a sizable population over this way. There is also evidence that the woodland variety of **caribou** (*Rangifer tarandus*) wandered as far south as Washtenaw County in years of deep snow further north. **Bison** (*Bison bison*) occurred pre-settlement in parts of the southern two tiers of Lower Peninsula counties; historical records have them in neighboring Jackson and Wayne Counties, so it is likely they were at least occasionally present in Washtenaw as well.

With that assortment of meat on the hoof, an

equally impressive set of fierce predators were on the prowl. **Gray wolf** (*Canis lupus*) occurred throughout the state; Cadillac reported them near Detroit and in southwest Michigan in the early 18th century. Their numbers began to decline rapidly when a bounty was established in 1838. **Mountain lions** (*Felis concolor*) also had a statewide distribution, including documented reports for Washtenaw County. One of those stated that the mother of Miss Julia Stannard was chased by a Cougar while riding on horseback to her home in Webster Township in 1830. The omnivorous **black bear** (*Ursus americanus*) was found everywhere in Michigan as well, with fossil evidence from Oakland County dating back 8,000 years. Cadillac reported the presence of **lynx** (*Felis lynx*) near Detroit, and there is an 1842 report for Washtenaw County. Lynx' smaller more southern cousin **bobcat** (*Felis rufus*) also occurred statewide, and survived locally into the 20th century.

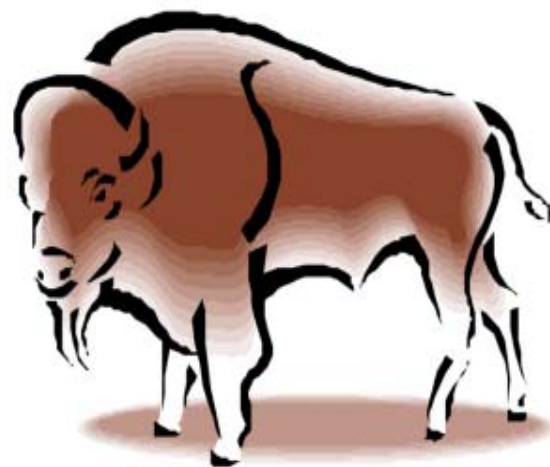
We're fortunate to still have **mink** (*Mustela vison*) in our midst—they're frequently seen frolicking along the shores of the Huron River throughout Hudson Mills Metropark and other nearby locations—but historically there were other furbearers present as well. Another sleek playful water mammal, the **river otter** (*Lutra canadensis*) was over-trapped for its valuable pelt, but was present in the Huron, Raisin, and Saline Rivers until about 1910. The pelt of **beavers** (*Castor canadensis*) was also greatly valued; it was reported as being extirpated by 1836 in Washtenaw County. There are even local historical reports of populations of one of my favorite animals, **fisher** (*Martes pennanti*), a large, powerful mink-like omnivore.

Washtenaw County was the crossroads for the northern extent of more southern species and the southern extent of more northern species of megafauna. When I wander off-trail in the state recreation areas through large tracts of mature forest and find remote isolated kettle wetlands and first-order streams, I sometimes drift off and think of all the magnificent animals I could have seen in those same areas not 200 years ago. As much as I treasure the local haunts, it makes me appreciate the real wilderness all the more.

Bob Treemore can be reached at rktreemore@aol.com.



By Bob Treemore



Former neighbor?

What You Can Do

How to get involved with your local food system

By Jennifer Fike

The reasons for buying local food make sense. When you purchase food grown or produced locally, you are providing a revenue stream for a local farmer, farmland is preserved, open space is maintained, greenhouse gas emissions are reduced due to a reduction in food transportation, and the local economy is supported. Below are concrete ways you can get involved with your local food system:

Individual

- Buy local produce, meats, and value-added products
- Shop at a farmers' market and talk to the farmers
- Ask your grocer to stock more local food
- Cook local food at home and invite friends to share
- Take your family to a U-pick farm
- Join a CSA (community-supported agriculture) farm

Community

- Support a local school garden
- Visit a local farm, orchard, or cider mill
- Start or participate in a community garden
- Make your farmers' market a festive place (live music, cooking demonstrations)
- Develop a school fundraiser using locally produced foods
- Let your school administrators know you support local food in school lunches
- Volunteer with community groups making efforts to create change in the food system
- Get involved as citizen planners to add food systems to the local planning agenda
- Work with a community of faith to organize a CSA group or to host a farmers' market

Policy

- Write to your local and state government officials in support of farm-to-school programs
- Collaborate with local government and community groups to establish a farmers' market
- Advocate for funding to build a permanent structure for your farmers' market
- Introduce and/or support greenbelt and land-preservation legislation

Additional information can be found in the Southeastern Michigan Community Food Profile (2007) available at: www.fsepmichigan.org/reports, the website of the Food System Economic Partnership (FSEP). FSEP is a nonprofit based in Ann Arbor and serving five counties in Southeast Michigan. FSEP's mission is to catalyze change in the regional food system by providing research, education, and outreach with urban and rural partnerships, resulting in agricultural development opportunities, sustainable communities, and healthy local economies.



Buying local food is good for the environment – and delicious!

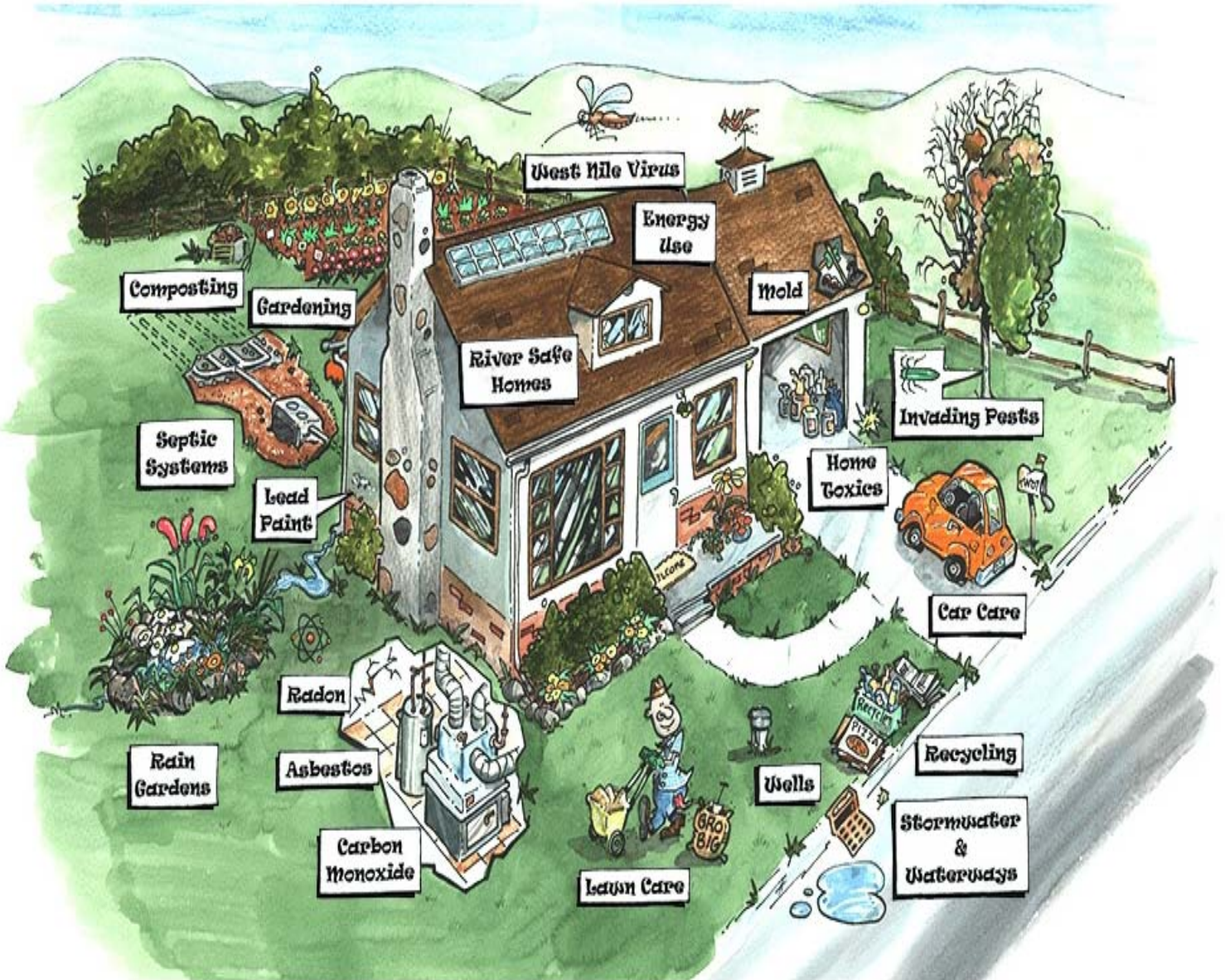


We provide bed maintenance, soil improvement, and consultation, AND we encourage the addition of native plants. We use only accepted organic methods to care for your yard. 14+ years in business in the Ann Arbor area.

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Do you know how to...

Build a rain garden? Dispose of toxics safely? Prevent lead poisoning? You can now visit Washtenaw County's "Environmental Portal" to learn about all this and more: www.ewashtenaw.org/ep.



The Environmental Portal: www.ewashtenaw.org/ep

Other Local Events

KEY:

TNC = The Nature Conservancy. For more information call 615-500-8229 or email IvesRoadFen@gmail.com. Bring your lunch.

NAP = City of Ann Arbor's Natural Area Preservation. For more information, please call 734-996-3266 or email nap@a2gov.org. For workdays, please wear long pants and closed-toe shoes. Minors must be accompanied by a guardian, or contact NAP in advance to obtain a release form if you would like older children to participate on their own.

Sunday June 1 - **Bird Hills Nature Area Coalition Group (NAP)**, 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Bring a friend and join us as we finish up our project at the Newport entrance. Meet at the Newport Rd. entrance. We'll be there with tools and snacks.

Saturday June 7 - **Wheeler Service Center (Landfill Site) Morning Bird Watching Walk (NAP)**, 7:30 am. Free and fun for all ages. Join city ornithologist Dea Armstrong as she leads a walk to look for birds at the old landfill site. Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet in the small parking lot on the right off the main entrance to the Material Recovery Facility off Platt Rd. just south of Ellsworth.

Friday June 13 - **Green Fair, Main Street Ann Arbor**, 6:00 to 9:00 pm. The Green Fair is an opportunity to learn about local environmental groups and activities. Four blocks downtown around the intersection of Main and Washington are closed for the event, with one block devoted to alternate fuel vehicles and another block showcasing the exciting world of bicycles.

Saturday June 14 - **Gallup Park Morning Bird Watching Walk (NAP)**, 7:30 to 9:30 am. Free and fun for all ages. Join city ornithologist Dea Armstrong as she leads a walk to look for birds in Gallup Park and Furstenberg Nature Area. Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet at the paddleboat dock in Gallup, near the canoe livery.

Saturday June 14 - **Stapp Nature Area Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Time to hack away at the invasive shrubs in this park. We'll work on trails too. Meet us in the parking lot at the intersection of Lancashire Dr. and Tuebingen Pkwy. We provide tools and nutritious snacks. No experience required, just enthusiasm!

Saturday June 21 - **Furstenberg Native Plant Garden Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 9:00 am to noon. Join park steward and master gardener Aunita Erskine to help weed the native plantings, check on the babies planted last year, and go for a botanical walk. Meet in the Furstenberg parking lot off Fuller Rd., across from Huron High School. Workday orientation starts promptly at 9:00 am.

Saturday June 21 - **Redbud Nature Area Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. We made lots of progress in this park last year. Help us continue to rid the area of invasive plants that crowd out the diversity of our native flora! We'll go for a nature walk too, time permitting. Bring the family. We'll meet up at the park entrance at the intersection of Parkwood Ave. and Jeanne St. As always, we provide tools and yummy snacks.

Saturday June 21 - **Buhr Park Children's Wet Meadow Potluck Workday (NAP)**, 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Come out for a fun evening of socializing, seed collection, and weeding in the Children's Wet Meadow. There will also be a tour of the park's features to learn about native plants and different ecosystems. Please bring a dish to pass, a place setting for the potluck, and gloves to do some weeding. Meet in the playground parking lot next to the tennis court at Cobblestone Farm in the park.

Sunday June 29 - **Wurster Park Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Buckthorn and honeysuckle are shrubs brought from abroad to America for horticultural use. They have no place in our woodlands! Help us eradicate them so the native woodland plants can grow. We will provide tools and energizing snacks. Meet at the cul de sac of N. Edgewood off W. Davis Ave.

Saturday July 5 - **Volunteer Day at Ives Road Fen (TNC)**, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Give the native ninebark and nannyberry a chance by cutting the buckthorn that is overwhelming it. Nature walk and refreshments to conclude the day. This is door prize day!

Saturday July 12 - **Volunteer Day at Ives Road Fen (TNC)**, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Meet some pretty caterpillars and help us fight back the buckthorn.

Saturday July 12 - **Cranbrook Nature Area Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 9:00 am to noon. Sometimes it seems like there is no end to the invasive shrubs! But if many people work together, we can maintain areas in our parks that are invasive-free and where the great diversity of our native plants can flourish. Join us! Meet in the Church of Christ parking lot at 2500 South Main. Snacks and tools provided.

Sunday July 13 - **Huron River Day, Gallup Park**, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The day will begin with a 5K run and one-mile fun run, followed by a dog walk. From noon until 4:00 pm, FREE festivities for the whole family will include children's activities, interesting river exhibits, live animals, grist mill tours and rubber duck races at Parker Mill, walking trips on the border-to-border trail, live music, refreshments, and more! There will also be discounted canoe rentals and canoe trips down the river. Don't miss this wonderful day of fun and celebration! For more specific information check www.a2gov.org/hrd.

Saturday July 19 - **Volunteer Day at Ives Road Fen (TNC)**, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Cut buckthorn in the fen amid the summer dragonflies and butterflies. See an area restored two years ago and have warm cookies and cold soda to finish.

continued pg. 13

Clean Car Update

By Alan Richardson

Here is the running total of the economic and environmental consequences of my choice to purchase and drive a Honda Civic GX fueled by natural gas.

Period covered: 18 October 2000 (purchase date) to 1 April 2008
Distance driven: 110,565 miles
Fuel purchased: 3,369 gallons gasoline equivalent (GGE)
Fuel economy: 32.8 miles/GGE
Fuel cost of CNG used: \$4,081
Average fuel cost: \$1.21 per GGE
Cost economy: 27.1 miles per dollar
Savings over gasoline: \$2,471
Payback mileage*: 82,438
Payback date*: 25 August 2006 (payback complete!)

* Payback of \$4,500 purchase premium for natural gas fuel option reduced by \$2,000 Clean Cities cash rebate and \$2,000 federal income deduction at 28% marginal tax rate in effect at time of purchase.

Estimated exhaust emissions of different passenger vehicles driven 110,565 miles (pounds)	Average car	California LEV**Civic GX	
Hydrocarbons	682	18.3	0.73
Carbon monoxide	5,090	828	38.97
Oxides of nitrogen	339	48.7	4.87
Total (pounds)	6,110	895.0	44.57

** Standard for 'Low Emission Vehicle' passenger car required by California starting in 2001

Saturday July 19 - **Hannah Nature Area Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 9:00 am to noon. Clearly defined pathways are important to maintaining the delicate ecosystems of our parks. Help us maintain, and possibly extend the trail. Meet us at the end of Bath St., west of 7th St. (between Miller and W. Huron). Tools provided. Burn off some calories and then put them all back on again with our great snacks!

Saturday July 19 - **Redbud Nature Area Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 1:00 to 4:00 pm. This park is looking great this year! Thanks to all the help we've gotten in the past! Help us to push it even further towards a native woodland and prairie. Meet at the park entrance at the intersection of Parkwood Ave. and Jeanne St. for some restoration work.

Saturday July 19 - **Buhr Park Children's Wet Meadow Potluck Workday (NAP)**, 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Come out for a fun evening of socializing, seed collection, and weeding in the Children's Wet Meadow. There will also be a tour of the park's features to learn about native plants and different ecosystems. Please bring a dish to pass, a place setting for the potluck, and gloves to do some weeding. Meet in the playground parking lot next to the tennis court at Cobblestone Farm in the park.

Sunday July 20 - **Wildlife by Kayak**, 10:00 am to noon. \$22/boat, all ages. Explore the wetlands and waters of the Huron River from the perspective of local wildlife, by canoe or kayak. Discover the hiding places of birds, turtles and amphibians, while you learn about water quality, wetland function and watershed health. For further information call Gallup Park, 734-662-9319.

Saturday July 26 - **Volunteer Day at Ives Road Fen (TNC)**, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Get a workout while you restore the fen ecology. Walk through rose milkweed and swamp thistle taller than you, before having refreshments.

Saturday July 26 - **Bluffs Nature Area Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 9:00 am to noon. Come see the results of persistence in the prairie here as we pull invasive, herbaceous plants. Each year there are fewer! We help with plant identification, and provide all equipment, plus healthy snacks. Good activity for the whole family. We'll meet you in front of the park steward's house at 236 Sunset Rd.

Saturday July 26 - **Furstenberg Native Plant Garden Stewardship Workday (NAP)**, 9:00 am to noon. Park steward and master gardener Aunita Erskine will lead volunteers in sprucing up this wonderful native plant garden. Meet in the Furstenberg parking lot off Fuller Rd., across from Huron High School. Workday orientation starts promptly at 9:00 am. A short nature walk will be held at the end of the workday, time permitting.

Saturday July 26 - **Mary Beth Doyle Park Stewardship Series (NAP)**, 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Earlier in the season we set out some plantings at the entrance to this park. Come see how they fare, and help tend to them with weeding and watering. Meet in the parking lot off Packard Rd., across from Easy St. All equipment provided, and energy-boosting snacks.



Shop to Stop Sprawl!

Living creatures need space to live. Over the past decade, Shopping for the Earth has helped generate \$110 million to preserve natural areas and farmland.

You can help us do more by buying EarthCash vouchers for the stores where you already shop.



For every \$20 of vouchers, you get \$20 in store credit and earn \$1 for the local Sierra Club.

Complete details are available at <http://michigan.sierraclub.org/huron/sfte.htm>

Help preserve nature at no cost to you!

Shopping for the Earth Order Form

Indicate the number of EarthCash vouchers you want for each store and available dollar amount below. Enclose your check payable to "Sierra Club-Huron Valley Group." Total order (\$500 maximum): \$ _____

	\$5	\$10	\$20	\$25	\$50	\$100
Ann Arbor People's Food Co-op ¹						
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Hiller's Markets ² (reloadable)						
Kroger ² (reloadable)						
Whole Foods ¹ (and affiliated stores)						
Meijer	A rebate program, no vouchers (neither paper nor cards). Please see http://michigan.sierraclub.org/huron/SFTE_Meijer.pdf or call Betsy at 734-997-9348.					

¹ non-reloadable card • Consider buying several cards.

² reloadable card • The Sierra Club receives a contribution when you reload card, so only one needed per person.

Arbor Brewing, Arbor Farms, Holiday are paper vouchers.

- check here to receive local Sierra Club e-mail updates
 if not a Sierra Club member, check here to receive local Sierra Club newsletter

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 (betsynoren@gmail.com)
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(Your data will not be shared)



**Huron
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www.michigan.sierraclub.org/huron/

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Vice-chair	
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Treasurer	
Ken Morley	677-7791
Secretary	
Joel Dalton*	945-8132
Chapter Representative	
Nancy Shiffler*	971-1157
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Vera Hernandez	665-8118
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Suzie Heiney, Editor	377-8248
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Kevin Bell	
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Patti Smith	649-4647
Gwen Nystuen	665-7632
Effie Hanchett	
Ed Steinman*	665-0248
Executive Committee	
Mike Anglin*	
Rita Mitchell*	665-0248

* = HVG Excom Member

How to Get HVG reminders via email!

At each HVG general meeting, there is an email sign up list. For those who missed it, or haven't joined us at a meeting, here's how you can get our general meeting reminders.

If you would like to receive email notices of each month's Huron Valley Group general meeting and occasional notices about other local Sierra Club activities send an email to Doug Cowherd at dmcowherd3@comcast.net with your name and "HVG email list" in the body of the message.

Are You A New Member?

Welcome to the Huron Valley Group of the Sierra Club. When you join the Sierra Club you are automatically a member of a local group, as well as a state chapter and the national organization. Membership entitles you to this newsletter as well as all editions of the state and national member publications. Check this page for our Directory with contacts on conservation, outings, political action, and the Inner City Outings program. Check the calendar in the middle of this issue for announcements of Monthly Public Program topics and our calendar of activities. We will be glad to see you at our next meeting or answer any questions if you care to call. Please take advantage of your membership as an opportunity to enjoy, preserve and protect our natural environment!

Membership

Yes, I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

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 Address _____
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Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club
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Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
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Spring 2008 Inside:

- Grow Locally, Eat Locally - page 1
- Steps to Save Money on Energy Bills - page 4
- Calendar of Events - page 7
- Local Food - How to Get Involved - page 10



Like nature? You could become a volunteer hike leader!

The Sierra Club Huron Valley Group is accepting new volunteer outings leaders to lead short day-hikes in and around Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti. We will reimburse you for American Red Cross basic first aid training. You will first go on the outing that you choose, and then lead that outing on a later date - or propose your own ideas! Great for your résumé, good company, exercise, and fun! Call Kathy Guerreso at 734-677-0823 for information on how to get started.

For a list of upcoming hikes, please visit www.michigan.sierraclub.org/huron.