

Nepessing News

Spring 2017 -Edition

The Nepessing Group represents the Sierra Club in Genesee, Lapeer and Northern Oakland counties.



SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

From the Chair

Robert S. Aguirre

Hello everyone,

My name is Robert Aguirre, and I am honored to have been elected to serve as Chairperson of our chapter at the January meeting of the Executive Committee. Fred Townsend and Carol Graham were re-elected to continue serving on the Executive Committee, and Wendy Lawton has been elected, taking the place of Terry Reechko who stepped down after serving many years on the board. Thank you Terry, for your energy and leadership as well as all of the other work you've been involved in over these past years.

Allow me to provide you with a brief personal history. My professional life has been largely spent with the criminal justice system, first as a police officer and most recently as a member of the Michigan Parole Board. I worked in different areas of investigations and

establishing new programs like Pretrial release, drug investigation teams, and other alternative release and treatment programs. I also have had the great pleasure of traveling throughout our country as a consultant for the National Institute of Corrections and around the world while working on a Rule of Law project in Afghanistan. It has been a privilege to experience other cultures and other regions of the world.

My wife Leslie and I and our two children spent many happy years tent camping all across our beautiful state. From Wilderness State Park in Mackinaw to the Porcupines in the western UP, and every park and waterfall in between, we explored and enjoyed our state's wondrous beauty. Our collective and my personal appreciation for the areas we explored, along with a very real sense of the fragility of the environment we explored, was always part of our journey. A memorable trip backpack skiing into the Tahquamenon

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Sierra Club April 12 Meeting Notice:
Dr. Mona Hanna Attisha Will Be our Guest Speaker at the April 12 Meeting To be held at the Mott Community College, Regional Technology Center, 1401 E. Court Street, Flint. 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm. Seating is limited reserve your space, call 762-0455.

Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something. - Carl Sagan

Region and living there for five days during January counts as one of my most remarkable life experiences. I've also had the great good fortune to have spent many happy summers sailing on both Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. All of these experiences have left a lasting impression on me of the true essence and beauty of the region in which we live.

After retiring I reconnected with former colleague, Richard (Dick) Barron, a longtime Sierra Club member and friend. My support for the Sierra Club and its outreach activities quickly grew to become an essential part of my life mission. I joined the Climate March in New York City and felt a kindred spirit with all of the people who made an effort to participate in some fashion, knowing that getting involved in a

substantive way is crucial, now more than ever. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve.

Among those opportunities to serve that are already listed in the newsletter please mark your calendars for **Lobby Day** in Lansing, on **March 29, 2017**. Sign up to attend by going to the Michigan Sierra Club website sierraclub.org/michigan. It is a fun time, and there will be a fundraiser at the end of the day. It provides a great opportunity to meet with legislators and discuss critical environmental issues. My hope for our work this coming year includes the continuation of the great outdoor activities that make the Sierra Club and the Lake Nepessing Group so dynamic. Time spent outdoors helps us gain insight into our environment's fragility and its

importance, not just to our everyday lives but to our very existence. It underscores the necessity of working to advocate for our environment. And, it is crucial for each one of us to be personally involved, to help educate, and to keep the message of the importance of the environment and the sanctity of water and lands at the forefront of all our elected representatives' thinking, now more than ever.



Michigan Chapter 50th Anniversary Party

Celebrate 50 Years of Sierra Club in Michigan The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter marks its 50th Anniversary on Saturday, June 10, 2017 Washtenaw Community College. Keynote Speaker: US Senator Gary Peters and other special guests, music, food and fun! For ticket/sponsorship information, visit: www.sierraclub.org/michigan/50th-anniversary

The Anne Woiwode Fund - Established in Our 50th Year... For the Next 50 Years

Contact Jan O'Connell at 616-956-6646 or jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org

PAC Update:

Ellen Warra

In view of the National bend away from environmental support, what can we do to locally to tie into the National and State Sierra Club more powerfully and sustainably?

The art of leveraging objectives from the top down, or grassroots up is tapping into the power of our citizenship to let our voices be heard collectively more effectively.

Attached Mike Berkowicz has taken the time to put together is a link that I encourage you to review and return to often. (See image below.)

This allows us to integrate our objectives at all levels now, so

that as needs arise we are able to respond as a unified team readily and with integrity.

Attached in the link are our 2017 Legislative priorities for Michigan, which Nepessing group was part of creating. As things arise locally, we are able to check this list quickly to see if it will be aligned with the priorities that we have agreed upon state wide.

There is a form on the link that we can fill out to join a rapid response team: A data base of qualified citizens on standby with their interests and expertise pre-qualified to move off the dime quickly and efficiently. We cannot control many things. We do get to control our reactions to them, and focus on the actions we can take to return the focus as

quickly and efficiently as possible to our desired outcome.

Your presence on this page and as a member of the Nepessing Sierra Club is commendable, and together we are being flooded with others who are standing by our sides ready to move in concert to a new outcome.

Let's be aligned and avoid any potential disconnects before they occur, focusing all of our collective energy and resources on the outcomes we are collectively envisioning.

Have fun, keep your chin up, and don't forget this is all a great play, and it isn't over yet. Together we are rewriting the script!

Updated February 23, 2017

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Current Action Items

Share this link with other environmentally-concerned citizens: <https://goo.gl/IsOtjF>

Issue	Why is this Important?	Background Info	Action
Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Legislative Priorities for 2017	The Michigan Sierra Club prioritizes issues for citizen lobbying and action during the Legislative Session. There will be additional action items on these throughout the coming two-year session	http://mi-environmental-news.blogspot.com/2017/01/sierra-club-announces-state-legislative.html	Please consider calling your State Representative http://house.michigan.gov/MHRP/ublic/ and State Senator http://www.senate.michigan.gov/ysbyaddress.html - tell them which of our priorities you want them to work on.
Trump Rapid Response Team	The unprecedented threat to public health, the environment, public lands and the climate posed by the Trump Administration requires vigilance and steady actions of resistance	Sign up here to receive updates, alerts and notices about upcoming actions!	https://sierraclub.tfaforms.net/155?id=70131000001DpBHAA0
Oppose President Trump's Nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the US Supreme Court	The US Supreme Court plays a critical role when it comes to environmental issues. From decisions that authorized the US EPA to take steps to regulate greenhouse gas emissions to defense of water quality regulations, the Supreme Court is that final backstop against an aggressive anti-environmental agenda in the White House and Congress.	Donald Trump's nominee for the Supreme Court Neil Gorsuch is outside the mainstream on almost every issue and unfit to serve. If confirmed, he would serve on the Court for decades, possibly putting the environment, as well as other top issues, at risk for generations. We cannot allow someone so radical to serve on the highest court in the land.	https://sierra.secure.force.com/actions/National?actionId=AR0067620&id=70131000001Dqg6AAC&utm_medium=web&utm_source=sieraclub&utm_campaign=democracy

We March:

By Linda Berker

YES There will be a bus organized for The Peoples Climate March, which is at noon on Saturday April 29th in Washington DC.

The Bus will Leave on Friday, April 28, 2017 at 10:30 PM from Linda Berker's Office In Davison, 9459 Davison Rd Davison Michigan.

WE MUST BE THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD. LETS SHOW WASHINGTON THAT CLIMATE CHANGE SHOULD MATTER TO THEM BECAUSE OUR EARTH MATTERS TO US!

The bus will return you to Davison from Washington DC over Saturday night so your back to Davison Sunday Morning!!! Bring your pillows and Blankets for sleeping on the bus there and back, the seats recline, it's a new 55 passenger bus with a bathroom, TV's and all the amenities. We will ride the same bus both ways so we can leave our stuff on the bus and travel light with signs and banners for the march.

More than 1 million marchers are expected. But this may be

the only bus leaving from the Lapeer/Davison/Flint area. We have rented the parking lot behind the building at 9459 Lapeer rd. for Saturday so our cars will be waiting for our return but do car pool to the building if you can. TICKETS WILL BE 125\$ for the round trip.

RSVP YOUR RESPONSE WITH YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, E-MAIL ADDRESS AND CELL # AND MAIL YOUR CHECK TO: Sierra Club c/o Linda Berker, 9459 Lapeer Rd, Davison, Michigan 48423

Still not convinced read this excerpt from the

CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK: "It's clearer than ever that we cannot just fight to stop climate change, we must speak out against injustice anywhere we see it. The same

have a healthy planet when our communities are robbed of their basic human rights. We will not allow climate deniers in Trump's cabinet to threaten the planet and we will not allow attacks on immigrants, communities of color, women, the LGBTQ community, and workers to become the new normal.

Join us as part of the People's Climate March on April 29 in Washington D.C. or at a local event near you. RSVP now.

Our fights are tied together, and we will only succeed together. That's why on April 29 we are calling on everyone to join us for a massive march to bring our demands to the streets of Washington, D.C. We will march for our air, our water, and our land.



government and corporate interests that work to restrict rights and threaten the safety and well-being of Muslims, people of color, women, and the LGBTQ community simultaneously back the fossil fuel projects that destroy our planet and make our communities sick. We cannot

We will march for clean energy jobs and climate justice. We will march for our communities and the people we love."

A History of Michigan Department of Environment Quality vs. Environmental Protection Agency

by Sierra Club (the Original EPA) Lobbyist T M Haley

The Michigan DEQ like Alexander Hamilton is a bastard child. I was a candidate for a BS in Mathematics at Lake Superior State College on Wednesday, April 22, 1970, the first Earth Day. I was surprised some of the main speakers were from Algoma Steel in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Why not? They were the greatest polluter in the Saint Mary River basin. The United States Environmental Protection Agency was created for the purpose of protecting human health and the environment and began operations on December 2, 1970. Hence the EPA can trace its lineage to Earth Day which arose from Rachel Carson's Silent Spring.

The Michigan DEQ was created in 1995 by Executive Order No. 1995-18 by Governor John Engler to promote wise management of Michigan's air, land, and water resources to support a sustainable environment, healthy communities and a vibrant economy. The MDEQ was aborted from the MDNR. The DEQ first director was Russell J. Harding who developed a national reputation for leading

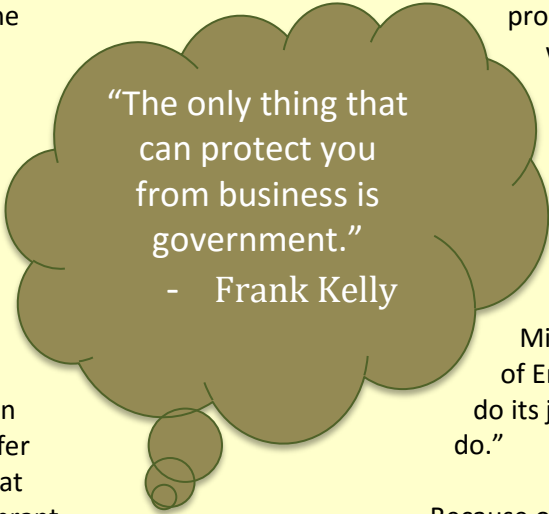
opposition to climate change. Governor Engler appointed Dan Wyant as Director of Michigan Department of Agriculture 1996-2005. Governor Synder appointed Dan Wyant as the Director of the MDEQ for his administration. Dan Wyant was on the environmental watch when the City of Flint switched to river water.

In the environmental community it is said that the MDEQ is a rubber stamp for the permits that Farm Bureau or any other business group who wants a vibrant economy. Looking at the ecological data, one

can infer that vibrant economy trumps the-wise management of Michigan's air land and water resources to support a sustainable environment and healthy communities.

There is a canard out there that says that the Flint water Crisis is a failure of government on all levels. On February 3, 2016 Congressman Dan Kildee testified before U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government

Reform Hearing on the Flint Water Crisis. He stated: "Emergency managers in Michigan have absolute authority over local governments." Later, "Again, there is an effort to try and create some false equivalency of responsibility. I'm critical of the EPA in this case, don't get me wrong. In fact, I have legislation that I am introducing that hopefully will be bipartisan and taken up soon, that would create more, much greater transparency by the EPA. I wish that as soon as the EPA discovered that there were problems with the water in Flint that they would have shouted from the mountain tops that there was problem in Flint. Instead, they kept insisting that the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality do its job, which it failed to do."



"The only thing that can protect you from business is government."
- Frank Kelly

Because of the MDEQ misbegotten origins, did the MDEQ political appointees think that their job was a vibrant economy and that the bottom line was the only rule that had to be followed? At the Michigan Radio *Issues and Ale* program in Ann Arbor, Frank Kelly was peddling his book *The PEOPLE'S LAWYER*, the former Attorney General of the State of Michigan stated three times, "The only thing that can protect you from business is government."

Bug Free Mexico

By Robert Simpson

Well, yes; Mexico is concerned about pollution. They have put out many campaigns to reduce the litter that is associated with Mexico, including the “plastic trees” where the fruit of the tree appears to be Mega and WalMart bags. But some of the same things that are happening in the U.S. with the new administration attempting to roll back environmental protections are also happening in Mexico and other countries. But this week, having been down here for a few weeks, my mind is again preoccupied with something that is missing here in the Puerto Vallarta area; bugs.

Yes, here we are living on the edge of a tropical jungle; the place where *Night of the Iguana* and *Predator* were filmed and except for ants, there are very few

insects. The expats who live here year round tell me that they spray heavily and often. There are plenty of birds around but who knows how many go off and die in the bushes with new ones coming in to replenish them. Of course tourists don't want to fight off mosquitoes and flies, so if US and Canadian dollars are the mainstay of the economy here, the constant spraying programs are necessary to keep norte Americanos coming back. I even found a cucaracha belly up in our villa the first week and I know that is a hardy bug because friends of mine in Kentucky and southern Ohio have pretty much given up spraying as it doesn't seem to affect them.

So I enjoy the beauty of the paradise here, but it's a little nerve racking to be unsure of how much in the way of poisons you are absorbing just relaxing poolside. Hope to see you all soon back in Bifflandia.



**Celebrate
Earth Day
with us!
Thursday, April 20,
2017
Flint Farmers'
Market
10 am to 3 pm
In the
Ramsdell Room**

**Sierra Club will be
hosting a table and
giving away free
White Pine Tree
Seedlings.
We would
appreciate any
time you can spend
with us!**

The Outdoors

By Denny Crispell

Congratulations are in order to our new Chairman Bob Aguirre. I enjoyed the position for a number of years, but honestly, it felt good to take that hat off. I won't be far away though, I'm wearing the Vice Chair title and still the Outing Chair. So, Good Luck Bob. You da Man!

We recently lost an old friend and member, Bill Somers. We hiked and backpacked many a trails. He even invited us to stay at his log cabin near Atlanta one winter to cross country ski. He warned us it was rustic, and



it sure was! I also remember he set himself a goal of backpacking the Michigan Shore to Shore Trail. I didn't know anyone who had ever tried it before, but I do now.

He tried it! And made 112 miles of it. That's more than I have ever covered on any one trip. I was impressed! Many involved with the Nepepping Group know Mike Haley. Mike recently lost his close brother Fred. It was sudden. We're very sorry Mike. I mention this because with our great Outing Schedule, many of us become close friends and next to family. The many years of hiking and backpacking adventures become campfire legends.

Recently, I was asked to babysit my two grandsons. But I had never watched the two of them together at the same time before, a 4-year-old and a 10-month-old. It was a more daunting experience than the time a bear came into our camp on Grand Island! But they survived and so did I. At one point, I was holding little Nicholas while he fell asleep, and his brother Aiden was leaning against me. I thought about how all of us have parents, grandparents, great grand-parents, aunts and uncles who helped raise us. We may not even remember some of them because we were too young. But they loved us. We can understand that now when we look at our own grandchildren. We also understand our time with them could be short. So, don't waste this time! Have fun with them! Take them out for a walk or hike. Start teaching them how to explore the outdoors. For many of us, that's when we learned to love the wild places. While we were holding our Grandfather's hand.

2017 Bee Symposium

Monday, April 17

5 to 8:30 PM

**Mott Community College
Regional Technology Center
1401 E. Court Street, Flint, MI**

Free and Open to the public

Symposium Speakers Schedule:

6:00 PM
Ben Phillips – MSU Extension Vegetable Crop Educator – **Michigan Native Bees**

6:40 PM
Abi Saeed – MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture Instructor & Master Gardener Coordinator – **Plants for Pollinators**

7:20 pm
Meghan Milbrath – MSU Entomology Academic Specialist – **2017 Honeybee status update**

- **Purchase Michigan Native Plants, Honey, Bee Products and Bee Keeping Supplies**
- **Visit Booth Displays: bee hives with live bees and information on caring for pollinators**

Ruth Mott Foundation
APPLEWOOD

GRIT
GREEN INITIATIVES TEAM

MOTT
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Nepessing Group
P O Box 436
Montrose, MI 48457

Make everyday Earth Day,
please recycle!



Visit us on the Web!

www.michigan.sierraclub.org/nepessing

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At-Large	Ellen Waara
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