

# Nepessing News

Winter 2014 -Edition



SIERRA  
CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892

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

## Nepessing Does New York

By Robert Simpson  
Several local Sierrans got on the "Climate bus" in late September to attend the climate rally/march in New York City, prior to the United Nations climate summit. The idea behind the gathering was to demonstrate the support that the American people have for action toward stabilizing climate and CO2 emissions that contribute to weather changes. If New York was the epicenter because of the location of the U.N., it was certainly not alone, as there were an estimated 2646 events worldwide in 162 countries taking place on 21 September. At least nine Nepessing folks were along on the Ann Arbor S/C bus, one of seven buses from Michigan. After a rather grueling bus ride, memorable, according to Richard Barron in a less than positive way, we arrived to take part in something, as Rich notes, that you will never forget. He noted the great variety in ages, races and the number of different groups taking part. (pictured right) Chair Denny Crispell, Carol Graham, Mike Haley, Rich's friend Robert Aguirre, Linda Berker and her friend Esther Fuchs, and Laurie Tata were among the

attendees. We were as a few drops of water in a rainstorm, as the crowd was huge and spread out the length of Central Park including the side streets. "It took almost two hours to get moving," Laurie noted, and by then, the dramatic moment of silence was on, a powerful moment for her and the rest of us, as it ended with a tremendous roar which came up and down all the streets in a great spine-tingling wave. She also noted the great diversity in the marchers, including children, elderly and people who were wheelchair bound but wanted to be part of it. It was a peaceful march with almost no reported trouble but many imaginative costumes and signs plus organized chanting, drumming, amateur musicians, elaborate creations such as a dinosaur made mostly from oil containers and huge signs which stretched across the



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entire street. Celebrities were there in force including Mayor DeBlasio, Jane Goodall, Mark Ruffalo, Sting, Leo DeCaprio, Bill McKibben and Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Linda Berker noted that we were 400,000 strong but while official estimates ranged from there down to a low of 310,000, it was by far the largest crowd I had ever been part of and Linda called it a wonderful experience and hopes that we can change America's direction toward a new energy future. She noted that the new Iraq/Syria war eclipsed some of our coverage but remains hopeful that we can make a difference. Our group had signs that were mainly focused on fracking but there were



many related causes on display in the streets which in some cases had little to do with climate, but would fall under the general umbrella of progressive/ liberal viewpoints. We followed John Ford and Rita Chapman through the crowds for quite a while but eventually we thinned out and lost track of each other, Mike took a subway ride to ground zero, and finally it was just Denny, Laurie and myself and even after a stop for drinks at a Mexican restaurant, I was hobbled by now, limping along and unable to find an empty cab. Laurie took an intermediate position between us, trying not to lose Denny and worried that I might not make the last 20 blocks. Finally I told them to go on and after a rest, I was able to negotiate my way to the bus. It was another sleepless jaunt back to the Great Lakes State, but we rode contented, filled with great memories and a feeling of achievement. It was my 70th birthday on the 20th and Laurie produced a cupcake with candle and so the bus sang Happy B-Day to me and it was, one of my best in memory.

## Chair Update

Denny Crispell, Chair Group Chair Denny Crispell I was once asked "What have we accomplished as the Nepessing Group of the Sierra Club?" I responded, "Maybe our greatest accomplishment is that we continue to exist." We are all volunteers here. But we exist because so many of our members believe in our cause "To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places." And by existing, people still

have a place they can come worries. Here is a group of like-minded people when they feel there is nowhere else to turn, no one else to listen, no one else who cares. Most people realize this is the only world we will ever have. But then they begin to doubt if our government knows that. They begin to wonder "Where is the EPA? Don't we have strict environmental laws to protect us?" No, not anymore! Not since President Bush exempted the oil companies from the Clean Air and Water Act. Now oil companies want to bring fracking to our area. People come to our meetings looking for help to protect them. We try to inform people what fracking is and maybe they won't sell or lease their mineral rights. This has stretched our meager resources. Next ET Rover wants to bring a gas pipeline through our area. More people are finding out they have fewer rights than what they believed. So they come to our meetings looking for help and guidance. I want everyone to try to understand the incredible amount of work **Linda Berker** and her secretary **Amy** have put into fighting for these causes.

**Ellen Waara** has brought her expertise and does a great job spreading the word to the membership. **Mike Keeler** put on a meeting in Swartz Creek. And there are many others, all volunteers believing in a cause. This is the definition of a grass roots organization. Now other news. **Lynn Livingston** has been our newsletter editor for many years. Because of a new job,

he has been forced to resign. Thanks **Lynn** for all the help you've been. Luckily for us, **Becky Gale-Gonzalez** and **Bob Simpson** have agreed to try to fill **Lynn's** shoes. This newsletter is their first. Thank you. A ballot is included for next year's Executive Committee. Please fill out and send in. The 2015 Outing Schedule will soon be finished. Nine of our group joined the People's Climate March in New York. The Texas Hold 'Em fund raiser had to be postponed. Mike Haley received a special appreciation award for all his Sierra Club efforts. Everyone, try to remember to get out and enjoy the great outdoors. Soon, the snow birds will be migrating to Florida.

## The not so funnies...



## The Extinction Crisis:

According to the Center for Biological Diversity nearly 1,000 species have become extinct over the past 500 years. Due primarily to man's intervention, specifically habitat loss, introduced exotic species and climate change a.k.a. Global Warming are to blame. Among the most recently extinct are the Passenger pigeon, Baiji River Dolphin, Tecopa Pupfish, Javan Tiger, Caribbean Monk Seal, and the Golden Toad. For a complete list search for "The Sixth Extinction" website.

## Fair Trade Coffee

By Bob Simpson

Here is a useful chart from **Fair World Project** which lists several coffee companies which claim to be following fair trade practices and selling organic, shade grown coffee. To find the entire article which documents each company, their practices and what they do right and wrong, check organic consumers association.

Those doing the best get 5 stars, while those that do not seem to be able to follow the practices are correspondingly lower. Here's a quick list of with ratings of top performers and some popular brands from Organic Bytes; rating organic coffee producers "Made In the Shade"



### 5\*\*\*\* Brands

- Equal Exchange - [bestdeal.com](http://bestdeal.com)/Amazon
- Just Coffee Coop - [shop.justcoffee.coop](http://shop.justcoffee.coop)
- Just Us! Peace Coffee - Amazon/Abe's Markets
- (online only)

### 4\*\*\*\* Brands

- Dean's Beans - Amazon
- Higher Grounds
- Larry's Beans - Amazon / Abe's Markets

- Level Ground
- Thanksgiving Coffee Co.
- Santropol

### 3\*\*\* Brands

- Counter Culture - [illy.com](http://illy.com)
- Caribou - everywhere

### 2\*\* Brands

- Allegro - Amazon
- Intelligentsia - [coffeebeandirect.com](http://coffeebeandirect.com)
- Peet's Coffee & Tea - online @ Peet's or stores in MD, VA & Washington DC
- Stumptown - [coffeebeandirect.com](http://coffeebeandirect.com)

### 1\* Brands

- Green Mountain Coffee - MANY PLACES
- Millstone
- Starbucks - EVERYWHERE

## Pipe dream a potential nightmare - Public Comment Alert



Southeast Michigan communities confront at least three proposed new or *expanded* massive natural gas pipelines designed to move Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio fracked natural gas into and through Michigan to Ontario. Sierra Club opposes the massive ramp up in natural gas development around the nation through fracking that is just one driver of these new pipeline proposals because the drilling, extraction and leakage in delivering this fossil fuel falls far short of being "clean energy". Construction of massive pipelines has significant local environmental impacts. Several critical hurdles for any additional construction of these pipelines, include: **acquisition of rights of way** from private or public landowners; **local permitting** approvals if warranted; and **approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)**, which must follow the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Specifically they must provide for a public environmental review process. We encourage members to attend:

Dec. 10, 2014 - 6 pm  
Holiday Inn Gateway Ctr.  
5353 Gateway Center  
Flint, MI 48507

Dec. 11, 2014 - 6 p.m.  
Maniaci Banquet  
69227North Main St  
Richmond, MI 48062

Send Written Comments:  
Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street, N.E. Washington 20426  
(14 copies to arrive by Dec. 18)

Learn more and see the map of the proposed pipeline at: [www.energytransfer.com](http://www.energytransfer.com) - click on Rover pipeline. (Excerpts from state director, Anne Woiwode's, online article courtesy of Ellen Warra.)

**BOARD ELECTIONS**

**Robert Aguirre**

**Carol Graham**

**Terry Reechko**

**Fred Townsend**

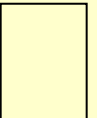
**Write-in:**

**Please post mark your ballot no later than 7 January, 2015. Votes will be counted at the EXCOM meeting on January 14. Those who have two members in one household can make a second copy of the ballot and turn it in at the Christmas party or place both in an envelope. Tri-fold this sheet to conceal the ballot, apply postage and tape all edges to mail.**



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FOUNDED 1892

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Make everyday Earth Day,  
please recycle!

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*Visit us on the Web!*

[www.michigan.sierraclub.org/nepessing](http://www.michigan.sierraclub.org/nepessing)

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#### **Board Members and Volunteers**

At-Large	Fred Townsend
At-Large	Ellen Waara
At-Large	Jack Minore
At-Large	Carol Graham
At-Large	Thomas Haley
At-Large	Linda Berker
At-Large	Terry Reechko
At-Large	Laurie Tata
At-Large	Denny Crispell

#### **Officers**

Chair	Denny Crispell
Vice Chair	Laurie Tata
Treasurer	Richard Naber
Secretary	Mike Haley

#### **Committees**

Conservation	Ellen Waara
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