



# eco-logue

One Earth  
One Chance

ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP

Volume 31, No. 2  
Apr./May 2001

## THIRD ANNUAL SIERRA CLUB ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Co-sponsored by Sierra Club and the Choices and the Environment Task Force of First Unitarian Church  
6:30 - 10:00 PM, Thursday, April 5, 2001- First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South

Keynote speech by Mary-Howell Martens

### BIOTECHNOLOGY: AN ORGANIC FARMER'S PERSPECTIVE

COME to an exciting evening kick-off for Earth Month and meet the Rochester regional environmental community. We expect almost all major environmental organizations and government agency representatives to be present.

- \* Over 20 booths by Environmental organizations and government agencies.
- \* Brief descriptions of more than 20 environmental groups
- \* Networking, food, beverages, free admission, friends, projects, etc., etc.

#### Schedule:

- 6:30 Doors open for visiting booths and networking
- 7:30 Keynote speech by Mary-Howell Martens
- 8:30 Introductions by environmental groups

Mary-Howell Martens is an organic farmer who is also a genetic plant researcher, writer, and lecturer. She is the administrator of the NY chapter of the Organic Crop Improvement Association and serves on the USDA Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biotechnology. Mary is trained and experienced in both Biotechnology and Organic Farming. She and her husband Klaas work a 1100-acre organic farm near Penn Yan. She will call for a balanced, rational approach to genetic engineering, bearing in mind the importance of working with nature rather than against it.

This year's program will be unique in that you'll be able to check it out ahead of time online at <http://members.tripod.com/FrankR41/>. You can post questions you would like to ask of our speaker. After the program, answers to your questions will be posted at that site.

### GET ACQUAINTED PARTY

Tuesday, May 8, 5:00 to 7:00 PM  
Chestnut Court, St. John's Meadows

This is the time for you to get acquainted with other Sierra Club members. It's an informal party for new members, old members, prospective members, or anyone who's interested. Club officers will be there to meet you and answer any questions you may have. There will be refreshments.

St. John's Meadows is on Johnsarbor Drive, on the south side of Elmwood Ave. west of the Clinton Ave. intersection. Bear to the right after entering Johnsarbor Drive and continue till you see the Chestnut Court sign.

### AN IMPRESSIVE VICTORY

Thanks to the efforts of our Wetlands Committee, the Town of Brighton, and local citizens, DEC Commissioner John Cahill has decided that despite its diminished size, the wetland known as BR-10, the Maxion property, will continue to merit protection. Its status is now enhanced from a Class II wetland to a Class I wetland for the reason that it was "of unusual local importance".

### FROG CALL RECORDING PROJECT

Do you enjoy listening to the sounds of a soft spring night? Do you know of a wetland that has a population of anurans (frogs and toads)? Would you like to help stem the tragic loss of amphibians?

"Direct field observation is an invaluable means of learning about these fascinating animals, and accurate records of sightings and behaviors can play an important role in the preservation of amphibian's habitats." - Thomas F. Tynning

Become a Frog Call Recorder! All you need is a cassette player that will record, legs that will walk to the edge of a wetland, and a willingness to buy a tape and mail it in at the end of the season.

We are trying to get recordings done in all the PESA wetland sites as well as any others that you may have interest in. Given the pressures of development in our area, nearly every piece of open land may be considered vulnerable. For more information or to register, call Sara Rubin at 442-6890 or e-mail to [rubin50@aol.com](mailto:rubin50@aol.com) The spring monitoring project is starting now so don't delay.

## FROM THE CHAIR



by Hugh Mitchell

One fall day, when I was a little boy, I became concerned about the leaves falling off a limb on the small maple tree outside our dining room. I reasoned that it must be dying. So, to save the tree, I climbed out on the limb and started sawing it off, one piece at a time. It strikes me now that this is a perfect metaphor for what we are doing to the only planet in the solar system where we can live. We're sawing off pieces of the healthy planet that we sit on.

As I see it, the problems which nature is encountering spring from our industrialization of the earth and our one-way economic ideas about endless growth. Why is a rising GNP considered a major indicator of national success? Why are corporate growth and constantly increasing revenues considered essential, while a stable economy based on sustainable processes that provide for all people is considered questionable?

It seems abundantly clear, even a simple fact, that we do have limits. Not only is our individual life limited, but also there are limits to population growth, to arable land, to forests and even limits to the giant blue sea and the beautiful blue atmosphere. As Vaclav Havel asks, why are there no limits to growth? Why is so little thought given to making our industrial processes sustainable rather than one-way processes from source to landfill? This is not to condemn our pitiful little blue recycling boxes. They are a good educational tool even if they cloud the picture of larger failure. I just think we need to raise our vision beyond the blue box to notice the loss of our sweet blue atmosphere.

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## COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

By Frank J. Regan

Since the last Eco-Logue, several people have decided to join our Communications Committee. We can always use more people to help us plan and promote our events, and to write letters and articles. If you have a little time and something to write with, please contact FrankRegan@RochesterEnvironment.com or call me at 271-0816. Lots of exciting programs are coming up this year and lots of new ideas on how to help our environment.

Lately, we have made a major contribution to the Seneca Park Zoo Development Plan Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). If you surf over to the this document online at <http://www.co.monroe.ny.us/aboutmc/misc/developmentplan.pdf> and look on page ten, Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology (section 5.5) and Wetlands (5.6), you'll see how the Sierra Club has influenced the impact statement.

You too can help with another important environmental impact statement for a concern nearby. The EPA has extended the public comment period on the Hudson River PCBs. EPA's decision is now expected in August 2001. Submissions of written comment should be postmarked by Tuesday, April 17, 2001, and sent to: Alison Hess/Doug Tomchuk, Hudson River PCBs Public Comment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 290 Broadway, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007-1866, Comments will also be accepted by E-mail until Tuesday, April 17, 2001 at: HudsonComment.Region2@epa.gov, Find out all about this at <http://www.epa.gov/r02earth/superfnd/hudson/whats-new.htm>

Finally, don't miss all the news, ways you can help our environment online, and events by subscribing to RochesterEnvironment.com's Newsletter. Once a week, get everything you need to know about our Rochester-area environment by signing up at: <http://www.egroups.com/group/RochesterEnvironment>

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Erv Schroeder's letter about voting for Nader in the February/March Eco-Logue elicited three responses. Here's a taste of them. Again, these letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Sierra Club. We continue to welcome your thoughts.

From **Robin McClellan**: "My friend Carl caught me sneaking off to the polls to vote and dragged me into a bar. He sat me down, bought me a beer, and told me, 'If you keep voting for the lesser of two evils long enough, you'll forget what you're voting for!' Ralph Nader wasn't perfect, but it was REAL pleasure to go to the polls and vote for someone who actually believed in the same things I do."

From **C. Michael Reimringer**: "I voted for Ralph Nader and my vote was not a wasted vote. Rather than blame Ralph Nader for Gore's loss, I suggest environmentalists examine our own consciences and ask ourselves the following questions: Why did Ralph Nader attract young volunteers? Why were Ralph's volunteers enthusiastic? What can the Democrats do in the 2002 and 2004 elections to reclaim enthusiastic environmentalists to work for Democratic candidates? What can we environmentalists do to nominate and elect strong environmental candidates in the future? I suggest we can do more to elect environmental candidates by focusing on these questions rather than blaming Ralph Nader and those who voted for him."

And from **Charlotte Baltus**: "It is not the case that Nader supporters saw little difference between Gore and Bush, at least not this Nader supporter. We did, however, see little difference between those funding the Gore and Bush campaigns. It is increasingly obvious that campaigns from major party candidates consist of meaningless rhetoric aimed at bringing in enough voters to defeat the opposition. Far more critical for success, however, is the campaign war chest, filled largely by a wealthy, powerful, and unrepresentative minority. George Bush knows who brought him to the dance, and he will take good care of them. But Al Gore would have done the same."

# OUTDOOR PAGE

## MOUNT MORRIS DAM TOUR

April 28th, 2001.

We're not just going to stand on the bank and look at the dam and the pretty scenery around it. We're actually going inside it for a guided tour. We will be walking through the tunnels and learning how the dam works to control the water in the Genesee River. So come along and join us.

We will meet at 10 AM at the lower parking lot of First Unitarian Church, Winton Ave. to car pool. The dam tour is scheduled for 11 AM to 12:30 PM. To get to the dam, take Interstate Highway 390 south to the Mt. Morris exit. Follow route 408 west through the village of Mt. Morris and up the hill on the other (west) side. Take Park Road on the right at the top of the hill to the dam.

People with children under 18 taking the tour will be asked to sign a waiver of liability. There are restaurants nearby that would be logical stops should groups care to eat and stay for an afternoon hike at Letchworth Park on their own. Glen Iris Restaurant and Inn (716-493-2622) in the park opens on April 13th, for the 2001 season with lunch from 12 noon to 2 PM. Genesee Falls Hotel (716-493-2484) at the southernmost end and outside the Park in Portageville, Route 436, is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The river bank near Portageville makes a nice end (take out) for canoeing on the southern Genesee River. Call Laura Arney 334-8548 for more information.

## WEBSTER WELL FIELD

10:00 AM, Saturday, May 5

There is a seldom visited natural area in Webster where the Village has had its water well pumping stations for many years. It's a wooded area on top of the hill that overlooks Irondequoit Bay. May should be an ideal time to explore it. We will meet at 10:00 AM at the lower parking lot of the First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Road South. Call Howard Camp, 473-1410 for more information.

## OUTINGS SCHEDULE

Here's a list of the outings we have planned for the coming months. Mark your calendar now for some outdoor fun this spring and summer. The April, May and June events are firm. Others are in the planning stages. If you're interested or would like to be involved in planning any of the summer or fall outings, call Howard or Carole Camp at 473-1410.

April 28	Mt. Morris Dam tour
May 5	Webster Well field
June 9	Genesee Headwaters
July ?	Canoe trip
August 3-5	Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania
Sept. 1	Great Bend and Big Bend combination
Oct. 13	Birding at Braddock's Bay

## GENESEE HEADWATERS

SATURDAY, JUNE 9TH, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Have you ever wondered where the Genesee River comes from? Did you ever want to know more about the multi-million-year history of the Genesee River valley? Come with us as we explore the mystery of the Genesee River as it carves its way through Letchworth Gorge after gurgling out as a healthy spring from under farmer Slabaugh's hill. Come with us on this all-day outing to Gold, Pennsylvania.

We will be accompanied by Professor Bill Chaisson, a U. of R. geology professor who has extensive knowledge about the Genesee Bio-region. Dr. Chaisson will give a running series of talks at a few carefully selected river sites such as Letchworth gorge. If our timing is right, we will stop for lunch at a real old time (undiscovered) country store in Gold, PA which is a treat in itself. Because of the high degree of interest in this outing we must limit it to the first 20 Sierra Club members who reserve a place. Please call 244-2625 in advance to RSVP if you would like to come.

Car pooling and maps will be available at the starting point. Meet at lower parking lot of First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South, no later than 8:30 AM, Saturday, June 9th. This event is free for members but be prepared to pay for entrance to Letchworth Park. You may want to bring binoculars, a light lunch, rain gear and footwear as appropriate for the weather that day.

## BARGAINS ON OUTDOOR GEAR

Eastern Mountain Sports Club Day  
Saturday, April 28

Eastern Mountain Sports at Marketplace Mall is having their annual Club Day April 28. They're offering 20% discounts to club members on all gear that day. All you have to do to get the discount is show them your Sierra Club membership card. EMS is near the Bon Ton entrance to the mall.

**Outdoor Fun ... For Everyone**  
**\$4 donated to Sierra Club for each book purchased**  
 + FREE Shipping

Qty	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Snow Trails</b> — Cross-country Ski & Snowshoe in Central & Western NY (78 trails) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Birding in Central &amp; Western NY</b> — Best Trails & Water Routes for Finding Birds (40 routes) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Take A Hike!</b> Family Walks in the Rochester Area (second edition) (60 trails) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Take A Hike!</b> Family Walks in the Finger Lakes & Genesee Valley Region (51 trails) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Take Your Bike!</b> Family Rides in the Rochester Area (30 trails) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Take Your Bike!</b> Family Rides in the Finger Lakes & Genesee Valley Region (40 trails) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Peak Experiences</b> — Guide to the Highest Point in Each of the 62 NY State Counties <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Bruce Trail</b> — An Adventure Along the Niagara Escarpment (hiking in Ontario, Canada)	<b>Only \$16.95 each</b>
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# CALENDAR

April 1	Sunday	1:00 PM	----- Population Committee/Env. Tsk Force -----	----- First Unitarian Church <sup>1</sup>
April 5	Thursday	7:00 PM	Kandid Coalition	6 Sibley Place
<b>April 5</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>----- ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM (see Page 1) -----</b>	<b>----- First Unitarian Church<sup>1</sup></b>
April 12	Thursday	5:30 PM	ExCom meeting <sup>2</sup>	St. John's Meadows <sup>2</sup>
April 18	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee -----	----- 150 Sunset Drive, Brighton
April 28	Saturday	10:00 AM	----- Outing, Mt. Morris Dam Tour (see Page 3) - Meet at First Unitarian Church Lot	
May 3	Thursday	7:00 PM	Kandid Coalition	6 Sibley Place
May 5	Saturday	10:00 AM	----- Outing, Webster Well Field (see page 3) --- Meet at First Unitarian Church Lot	
May 6	Sunday	1:00 PM	Population & Sustainability Committee	First Unitarian Church <sup>1</sup>
May 8	Tuesday	5:00-7:00 PM	----- Get Acquainted Party (see page 1) -----	----- St. John's Meadows
May 10	Thursday	5:30 PM	----- ExCom meeting <sup>2</sup> -----	----- St. John's Meadows <sup>2</sup>
May 15	Tuesday		Eco-logue deadline	
May 16	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee -----	----- 150 Sunset Drive, Brighton
May 27	Sunday			Eco-logue mailing party <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd.

<sup>2</sup>ExCom meetings are open to members. Call Ginny Tyler if coming 244-4084.

<sup>3</sup>Call Ray Nelson, 342-2734 for time & location

Visit our web site at [www.sierraclub.org/chapters/ny/rochester](http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/ny/rochester)

Also worth a visit: <http://rochesterenvironment.com>

To add your name to our e-mail list send your address to [e2s@cyber1.servtech.com](mailto:e2s@cyber1.servtech.com).

Call 420-4363 for info about Sierra Club events and voice mail.