



eco-logue

Explore, enjoy
and protect
the planet

ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP

Volume 32, No. 4
Sept./Oct. 2002

Third Annual Fall Festival Featuring Environmental Author John Mitchell, Pasta Dinner

5 PM, Thursday, September 12, at the Tay House

The Executive Committee is happy to announce its Third Annual Fall Festival. This year we will host John Hanson Mitchell, author of seven books on the environment and editor of *Sanctuary*, the award-winning magazine of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Before his talk, you can enjoy a nature walk, wine and cheese, and a full pasta dinner. The event takes place



on Thursday, September 12, at the Tay House in Cobb's Hill Park, Rochester.

The evening begins at 5 p.m. with a walk in the woods led by Hugh Mitchell, our group's chair (and the speaker's brother). Hugh can be counted on to help all ages identify

trees, as well as sharing facts about environmental issues in the park area.

Or, simply enjoy wine and cheese and conversation with the author.

At 6 dinner is served: pasta and three sauces lovingly prepared by volunteers, mountains of salad, and of course, plenty of garlic bread. And don't forget the cake! Soft drinks, coffee, and tea are included; beer and wine will also be

available.

After dinner, John Hanson Mitchell will deliver his talk on "Nature and the Sense of Place," followed by questions and discussion. Mitchell is the author of *Ceremonial Time: 15,000 Years on One Square Mile of Land*, as well as

other books examining "place," such as *The Wildest Place On Earth*. His most recent book, *Following The Sun*, traces his 1,500 mile bike pilgrimage from Spain to the Scottish Hebrides.

Buy your tickets now! Have fun and support your club! Tickets for the evening are \$15 each, or two for \$25; children twelve & under are \$10. Seating is limited, so order yours soon. Mail a check postmarked by September 5 and made out to "Sierra Club, RRG" to: David Ruekberg, 3558 Oatka Trail, Leroy, NY 14482. (Please include your phone number.) After September 5 call Sierra Club at 244-2625 and leave a message. Or simply call the Sierra Club message line at 244-2625 and order your tickets by phone.

See page 3 for directions to Tay House Lodge.

A Focus On The River Region by Friends Of The Genesee

Sierra Club Membership Meeting: October 17th, 7:15pm Third Presbyterian Church, corner Meigs & East Ave.

Do you only think of the Genesee River as just a muddy waterway? Are you looking for somewhere else to canoe? Or perhaps you'd just like to learn more about this beautiful river. It's a resource that is often overlooked. Come to our October membership meeting and be prepared to be surprised at the lovely and lively waters of this remarkable resource which exists right in our midst. Then you'll have all winter to dream of getting out to enjoy



the river next Spring.

There are many ways to enjoy the river. And there will be more in the future. There are new City initiatives

that focus on recreation, a DEC report on the Genesee River basin, and DOT plans to build car-top boat access.

Laura Arney and Sue Mihalyi are in the process of organizing a group called Friends of the Genesee River. For our October membership meeting, they will make a PowerPoint presentation on the current state of the Genesee River, its recreational opportunities and its water quality challenges.

From the Chair



by Hugh Mitchell

One of the pleasures and privileges of the Chair is the invitation to sound off through this column. Right now I want to sound off about one of my favorite environmental subjects - PARKS. Our Rochester Region has one of the finest park systems in the United States. Considering this fact I can never understand why there are constant pressures to distort, commercialize or sell our parks and why there is such government resistance to investing in key pieces of new parkland. Here are some park related issues which point to larger trends.

This spring, the NY State legislature approved the sale of 123 acres of Riverton Golf Course and Nature Park in Henrietta to a private purchaser. These fully developed public acres fronting on the Genesee River will be practically given away by the Henrietta administration for a mere \$3,658 per

acre. Compare this to three undeveloped acres in the city on Field Street, potentially a critical part of a new Pinnacle Hill Park, which have come up for sale at \$43,300 per acre. Henrietta Supervisor James Breese offers the lame excuse that he wants to sell the Riverton Park to raise money to develop new parks, (which makes no sense at all). The Riverton sale stands in contrast to the recent NY State purchase (at \$4.6 million) of a few acres to create the Scenic Hudson Park at Irvington, or the State purchase of 111 acres of land on the Beaverkill River. Both are state efforts to save riverfront land.

Aside from the economic distortions of selling parks to low bidding friends is the constant battle to maintain the quality of our parks. The controversy over destroying the historic Trout Pond area of Seneca Park, designed by Olmstead, reminds me of the long battle in the 1970's to save another Olmstead creation, Genesee Valley Park. In the latter case it practically took a social revolution to wake Rochester leaders from their mantra that "all development is good develop-

ment." As our Sierra Club studies of sprawl reveal, very little development is good for the environment. We need to be particularly vigilant around well-meaning park development proposals such as the Zoo expansion.

Finally, there is the proposal to develop an Emerald Necklace for Rochester by creating a new Pinnacle Hill Park. Three key acres have come up for sale which could form the base for a new Pinnacle Hill Park. Hillside Children's Center owns most of Pinnacle Hill and permits public visits. However public access is largely blocked from these magnificent wooded acres and great views by three acres on Field Street that are privately owned. These three acres are the key to public use and long term preservation of the rest of the hill. The public should be clamoring to immediately purchase them despite the vastly over inflated price.

Any one who wants to work on these issues should call the Sierra Club or contact me through e-mail at goshawk@frontiernet.net.

2 , 4 6 8 - Who Do We Appreciate ?

The membership count of the Sierra Club Rochester Regional Group now stands at 2,468 - the highest number of members in this group's history. We want to thank all of you for your support. Such a substantial membership base gives us a great deal of clout on local environmental issues. But there's a way we could be even more effective - by having a comprehensive list of member's e-mail addresses. If we had that information we could:

- quickly notify you of hot topics you may not be aware of
- suggest you write or call your local legislators and voice your opinion on issues of importance to us
- suggest letters to the editors you may want to write

- keep you informed on how legislators vote on issues
- advise you on ballot issues that have an environmental impact
- make you aware of opportunities to get involved
- notify you about upcoming social events, outings and club meetings
- send you the results of our board meetings
- send you community-specific alerts to make you aware of what's going on in your own backyard

We try to keep you informed via the Eco-Logue but space is limited, expensive, and it is not as instantaneous as e-mail. Rest assured we pledge not to give out any of the information you provide us to anyone else. You

won't receive tons of e-mail from us - we will try to limit it to one mailing per week. And at any time you can request that your name be taken off the list. To submit your e-mail address just say that you want to be on the list by contacting sierraclubmail@rochesterenvironment.com For a full description of our E-mail and our privacy policy, surf over to http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/e-mail_list.htm

Once again, we appreciate your past support and we know we can make this club even more effective in the future with the help of all 2,468 of you!

Eco-logue is published five times a year by the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club, PO Box 39516, Rochester, NY 14604-9516. Subscriptions are free to Sierra Club members living in the Rochester Region, and available at \$10 per year to others.

Help Save Seneca Park

The Landmark Society of Western New York is a key player in the Save Our Seneca Park (SOS) Alliance's efforts to halt the proposed zoo and parking lot expansion. And they need your help!

On June 11th, the Monroe County legislature narrowly approved a zoo expansion plan that would effectively destroy the beautiful lower Seneca Park by building a large parking lot there. The Alliance strongly believes that the County failed to take a "hard look" at alternatives to the preferred plan, and avoided looking for ways to minimize damage to the environment.

A Supreme Court hearing originally scheduled for July 22 to determine whether the County must abide by the City of Rochester's zoning regulations was delayed for unknown reasons by the presiding Judge. Once the hearing occurs, if the City prevails, its regulations will make it very difficult for the zoo to overrun the park. However, if the City loses, a lawsuit against the County is the only way to challenge the zoo expansion into the park. Because there is a time limit on filing legal challenges, the Alliance must begin preparing for a lawsuit before a decision comes from the Supreme Court.

The Alliance is looking to raise \$10,000 for a Seneca Park Legal Defense fund. They would love to have 100 people donate \$100 each, but any contribution is very welcome. Checks should be made out to the Landmark Society, with a note or notation in the memo line on the check, saying the donation is for the Seneca Park Legal Defense Fund. Donations are tax deductible. Send contributions to SOS c/o Landmark Society, 133 S. Fitzhugh St., Rochester, 14608.

See the Landmark Society's webpage for more information:

www.landmarksociety.org, or see the Save our Seneca Park website at www.sospark.org.

Irradiated Meat

by Judy Braiman

On June 29, a group of activists held a rally in front of Wegmans East Ave. market to highlight the problems of irradiated ground beef. Participating groups included the Green Party, Politics of Food, Empire State Consumer Association, Rochesterians Against the Misuse of Pesticides (RAMP), and Public Citizen. In response, Wegmans invited representatives of these groups to meet with them in July to discuss their concerns. The meeting was held, but nothing was resolved. Some scientific data was exchanged.

The real problem is the filth in the meat industry. Just this July, millions of pounds of ground beef were recalled

nationwide because of E. coli bacteria contamination found in the meat. Many people were made ill by that particular product.

Last year according to an investigative report in the July 9, 2001 Washington Post, "One of the nation's largest meat packing plants, Excel Corp.'s Fort Morgan Colorado facility, was cited 26 times over a 10-month period before Brianna Kriefall's death for letting feces contaminate meat, documents show." Brianna Kriefall was a 3 yr. old who died after consuming watermelon inadvertently splattered with juices from tainted sirloin tips. The meat was traced to the Excel facility.

Wegmans buys their beef from Excel.

Clean Air Update

by Laura Arney

The Clean Air/ Clean Water committee is in the process of making formal written comments on the Kodak draft permit that regulates their air emissions under Title V (5) of the Clean Air Act. We have chosen to focus on Kodak Park Building 218 which contains the hazardous waste incinerator, and Building 95 at Kings Landing which also has an incinerator. These are the sources of dioxin emissions along with the power plant. The deadline for comments to be submitted to the DEC

for the participation period is Sept. 17th, 2002. In addition, on Sept 12, 2002, the DEC will hold public hearings at the Holiday Inn, Rochester Airport location just off Hwy 390, at 911 Brooks Ave. There are two times to choose from, 2 PM to 4 PM and 6:30 PM until completion. If you are interested in having a say about our community air quality as it relates to the Eastman Kodak facility, please contact Laura E. Arney for further information at 334-8548.

Directions to Tay House Lodge:

From South Winton Road: Turn west (toward the city) at Temple Beth El onto Hillside Ave. At School #1 turn left into entrance to Tay House. (Hillside Ave. off Winton Road South is between East Ave. and Highland Ave. and can be easily accessed from Route 490.)

From Culver Road: Take Park Road (Norris Drive) through Cobbs Hill Park. At the Water Authority take the right fork to Hillside Avenue. Look for School #1.

Tay House parking is behind (west of) School #1. From the parking lot, walk up the hill to Tay House Lodge.



Wind Energy Available

by Michael Dahl, Ph.D.

You can now buy electricity produced from wind turbines for your home. This electricity is delivered somewhat indirectly. New Wind Energy Co. generates electricity and delivers it to the New York State regional electric grid on behalf of its customers. You will receive a certificate verifying the amount of electricity delivered into the grid on your behalf. This is independently audited by Green-e, the national renewable electricity certification program. Your electricity is delivered to you by your local provider. The delivery is indirect in that the wind energy electricity is put into the larger grid and you get the amount of power you have paid for from the grid.

As wind energy costs a little more to produce, there is an additional charge for your wind power. For an average household using 600 kWh per month the additional cost is \$15 per month. This \$15 is added to your regular electric bill from your local provider. The \$15 is then sent from your local provider to New Wind Energy. Wind energy is sold in blocks of 100 kWh per month.

In New York, New Wind Energy is provided from the 30-MW Fenner Wind Farm in Madison County, NY (just east of Syracuse). As customer demand continues to build, New Wind Energy will develop new wind farms throughout New York State. Community Energy, the parent company, is big in Pennsylvania and is just getting started in New York. Community Energy has delivered the five biggest "commercial" purchases of wind energy in the United States. The University of Pennsylvania, Penn State University, Carnegie Mellon University, Philadelphia Suburban Corporation and Giant Eagle are purchasing electricity from New Wind. You can read about New Wind Energy and make purchases at www.NewWindEnergy.com or call them at 1-866-WIND-123.

Energy Smart Communities: Promoting Sustainable Communities within the Region

by Will Poppe

Communities in the Finger Lakes region now have resources available to help them reduce their energy costs. Finger Lakes Energy Smart Communities was launched to assist with energy-related community projects aimed at creating environmental, economic, and social benefits for the region. The program is one of seven local partnerships, under the umbrella of the New York Energy Smart Communities program developed by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). In the Finger Lakes Region, the program is managed by the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council.

Will Poppe, Finger Lakes Energy Smart Coordinator, oversees commu-

nity-based projects, engages local partners who contribute to projects, and helps match projects with State and local resources. NYSERDA supports the program by offering assistance for energy-efficiency improvements and renewable energy. For example, NYSERDA offers low-interest loans, technical assistance, and cash incentives to help residents or businesses with anything from purchasing an Energy Star® refrigerator to building a "green" office building.

To learn more about Finger Lakes Energy Smart Communities, please contact Will Poppe, Finger Lakes Energy Smart Coordinator at 585-454-0190 x 21 or wpoppe@gflrpc.org.

Saving Energy

by Eric Smith

Would you like to make an immediate impact on energy issues? Becoming energy efficient is the best way to take action. Alternative energy sources are making great strides but here are some things you can do right now around the house:

1) Change your light bulbs to compact fluorescent. These are available at most department stores. They use less electricity AND last many times longer than incandescent bulbs.

2) Put motion detectors on your outside lights. It is unnecessary to leave these lights on all night.

3) Lower your hot water thermostat to 120°. Heating cold water is very inefficient. Consider preheating the cold water. Doucette Industries makes a very interesting product to do this. You can contact a local rep at 585-226-2920.

4) Insulate your hot water heater. This is as simple as adding a pre-made cover to your unit.

5) Save hot water usage with a low flow shower head. This is especially effective if there are several showers taken each day.

Remember, things that heat or cool are very inefficient. Coffee makers, air conditioners, stoves, toasters all use large amounts of energy. Be mindful of this fact and minimize their use whenever possible. It is much easier to block out the sun during the day than it is to cool a hot sunny room. Energy usage can be reduced in many other ways. Reducing your trash, composting organic waste, passive heating and cooling in your house, and smart driving techniques all help conserve energy. Be a smart consumer and pay attention to the energy ratings on appliances. Contact the Sierra Club Energy Group via email at:

rochester_energy_group@hotmail.com

Outing Schedule - Fall 2002

Please Note: the date for the Braddock's Bay hike has been moved back two weeks

Date	Destination	Meeting	Special Equipment
September 21	Coastal Cleanup	9:00 AM Seth Green Dr.	Sturdy shoes, gloves
September 28	Braddock's Bay	9:30 AM at Unitarian Church	Bring Bag Lunch
October 12	Seneca Park	9:30 AM at Unitarian Church	Bring Bag Lunch
November 9	Conklin Gully	9:30 AM at Unitarian Church	Bring Bag Lunch

Coastal Clean-up

Saturday, September 21, 2002

The Sierra Club Clean Air and Clean Water Committee will coordinate our participation in the 16th Annual International Coastal Cleanup, a national event which is locally run by Margit Brazda Poirier with the Water Education Collaborative. Last year, the effort to pick up trash and litter from Durand Eastman Beach, Genesee Valley Park, Seth Green fishing site, and Turning Point Park yielded over two tons of trash. As our local club is learning about the Genesee River, we have volunteered for the river section that is called Seth Green Island. Geology enthusiasts will love viewing the rocky outcroppings carved by the river.

We will meet at the parking lot above the RG&E station. To get there, go to the intersection of Norton Street

and St. Paul St., and turn west onto Seth Green Drive. The parking lot is on your left just 50 yards down Seth Green Drive. Check-in time is 9:00 AM, Sept 21, 2002. We will have a short walk down the road and a fishing trail along the river bank. Wear sturdy shoes, bring garden gloves. Gloves and plastic bags will be provided. Working in teams, we will pickup trash and collect data for a national database. At noon, we will be treated to a free "trash bash" at the Sunset Shelter at Durand Eastman Park. You can enjoy a picnic lunch, games, prizes, and entertainment to celebrate your efforts.

Please call (334-8548) to let Laura Arney know you are coming. Or you can register online at www.thewec.org

Braddock's Bay

Saturday, September 28, 2002

This hike is scheduled to catch a part of the migration season. The area is one of the premier bird-watcher's destination in the eastern U.S.

Seneca Park

Saturday, October 12, 2002

Seneca Park is currently a battleground for parkland preservation in Monroe County. This hike follows an old Seneca trail in an area of the park not being threatened, yielding some of the best vistas of the Genesee gorge and fall foliage in Monroe County.

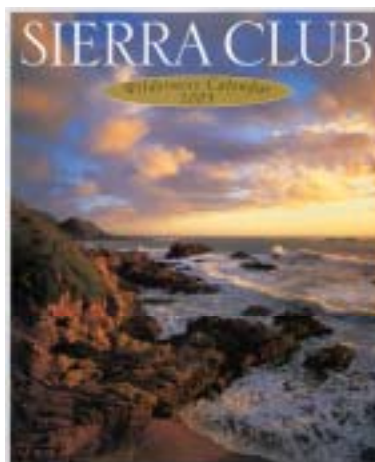
Conklin Gully

Saturday, November 9, 2002

This is a longer and somewhat more rugged hike. Some rate Conklin Gully as "Number Three" for spectacular waterfall views, right after Niagara and Letchworth.

SIERRA CLUB 2003 CALENDARS

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CALENDAR

Sept. 5	Thursday	6:30 PM	----- ExCom meeting ² -----	St. John's Meadows
Sept. 7	Saturday		Trail marking from Gell House	Call Hugh Mitchell for info, 244-2625
Sept. 12	Thursday	5:00 PM	----- Fall Festival (see page 1) -----	Tay House, Cobbs Hill Park
Sept. 18	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Wetlands Committee	150 Sunset Drive, Brighton
Sept. 25	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Energy Committee -----	25 Brook Hill Lane, Apt. E, Penfield ⁵
Sept. 21	Saturday	9:00 AM	Coastal Cleanup (see page 5)	Seth Green Drive ⁴
Sept. 28	Saturday	9:30 AM	----- Outing: Braddock's Bay (see page 5) -----	meet at First Unitarian Church ¹
Oct. 6	Sunday		Eco-logue deadline	
Oct. 10	Thursday	6:30 PM	----- ExCom meeting ² -----	St. John's Meadows
Oct. 12	Saturday	9:30 AM	Outing: Seneca Park (see page 5)	meet at First Unitarian Church ¹
Oct. 16	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Wetlands Committee	150 Sunset Drive, Brighton
Oct. 17	Thursday	7:15 PM	----- General Meeting, Friends of Genesee (see page 1) -----	Third Presbyterian Church³
Oct. 23	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Energy Committee	25 Brook Hill Lane, Apt. E, Penfield ⁵
Nov. 9	Saturday	9:30 AM	----- Outing: Conklin Gully (see page 5) -----	meet at First Unitarian Church ¹

¹First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South

²Open to members. Call Hugh Mitchell at 244-2625.

³East Ave. at Meigs, Rochester

⁴Call Laura Arney 334-8548 to register

⁵Call Michael at 586-4618 for directions

Visit our web site at <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester>

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

To add your name to our e-mail list send your address to frankrrr@rochester.rr.com

Call 244-2625 for info about Sierra Club events and voice mail.