

eco-logue

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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Rochester Regional Group

June 2012 - August 2012

A rising ocean threatens

major food producing

areas on earth, which

could trigger a forced

migration of over 600

million people. The tre-

mendous productivity of the Antarctic Ocean

depends upon deep

ocean currents and

wind patterns that are

altered. Such changes

of major fish and krill

likely to be dramatically

could mean the collapse

producing areas critical

guins, whales, seals and

We must end this sce-

nario before it reaches

such a "tipping point."

We must demand that

our leaders set policies

to the survival of pen-

Antarctica: **Trouble in Paradise**

Antarctica- a forbiddingly frozen place, hovering in clouds and ice beyond the horizon, yet teeming with life! As an environmental educator, I was aware that its average temperature was rising rapidly.

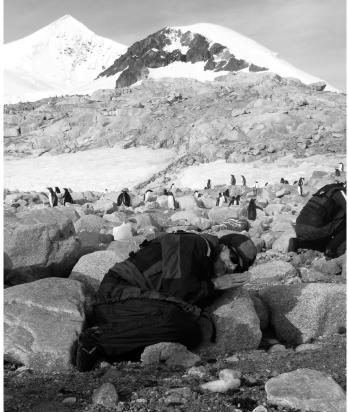
I wanted to see it before it melted, yet how could I reconcile the carbon footprint I would create to travel there? My decision: use my experience to raise awareness about the urgent crisis of global warming.

"Isn't it all just water and ice?" I've been asked. There is a huge amount of ice, capping the rugged peaks, creeping in mighty glaciers down slopes, and floating in unbelievable shapes and sizes in the ocean. The scenery is fantastic and alive with sounds: waves slapping on icebergs, and the boom of ice breaking off glaciers. It is also filled with the sounds of life: whales spouting, a leopard seal thrashing a captured penguin, and the chattering of penguins in huge colonies. On some days, it is a land of somber clouds, steel gray ice, and brooding black rock.

On others, it is turquoise-green water, with blinding white ice that turns breath-taking midnight blue in crevasses. A total wonderland!

But...in West Antarctica this scenery is rapidly changing. There is more and more visible rock. The ice is melting off the sides of mountains and uncovering once-hidden islands. The rapid pace of this melting has even veteran ice-watchers amazed. Recent research reveals that warming ocean waters are melting away the base of the ice shelves, which could cause the glaciers to flow faster into the ocean, raising the ocean level at an ever-increasing rate.

concern. Ice reflects much more sunlight than water. The less ice, the more heat is absorbed, and the faster the warming. Climate scientists say there is a point where this effect reaches a runaway pace called a "tipping point."



Peter poses with some penguins in Antarctica

and ourselves.

to curb greenhouse gas emissions and reward energy-saving technology and efforts. It will require a determined effort to limit population growth and the consumption of Earth's resources. In this critical election year, let's contact our elected officials and candidate hopefuls to ask what policies they will set forth to address climate change, and to demand that they do something. Let's do it for our children, our grandchildren,

fish.

For more on tipping points, read "Boundaries for a Healthy Planet" in Scientific American, April, 2010, p. 56.

Peter Debes, a life-long naturalist, lectures and has led eco-tours for over 20 years. You may contact him by calling the Sierra Club at (585) 234-1056.

The consequences of these changes are of deep



From the Chair: Connect the Dots

Our 14th Annual Environmental Forum, Our Water's Fragile Future: Hydrofracking, Climate Change, and Privatization went swimmingly. We'll continue to focus on the items noted in the title. Add another top priority at all levels of the Club – energy – and we've got our work cut out for us! These areas should keep us all busy through the summer, the year and the decade. But are they really separate issues? No, they are as interconnected as the food chain. They are as interconnected as extreme weather and climate change. They are as interconnected as you and I. And we are. Connect the dots.

for generations to come. Public trust means that government has a duty to hold and manage water for the benefit of all citizens — farmers, businesses, and communities alike — free from abuse or export for sale by the state or private interests.

In case you missed the Forum and/or Olson's 1370AM WXXI radio appearance, they are now online: http://newyork.sierraclub. org/rochester. To learn more, email rochestergreatlakes@gmail. com or call us at 585-234-1056.

On May 5, people gathered at thousands of events across the globe to "connect the dots" be-

reefs. In Rochester, we got to-



Environmental Attorney Jim Olson addresses 14th Annual Environmental Forum audience Photo by: Vesna Sanders

and climate change. Villagers in Pakistan held up "dots" where their houses were swept away in 2010's devastating floods. Students in the Marshall Islands held dots underwater near their dying coral

tween ex-

treme weather

hasn't felt the sting of climate change... People everywhere are saying the same thing: our tragedy is not some isolated trauma, it's part of a pattern."

Though an interrupted apple crop is hardly as traumatic as an entire village being swept away, the changes being felt globally do connect us all. And together, we must continue our grassroots actions to raise awareness and reduce carbon emissions. But we must also demand immediate, bold action from our leaders. When running for office in 2008, Barack Obama said "The threat from climate change is serious, it is urgent, and it is growing." It has grown and is still growing under his watch, yet he rarely discusses it anymore, much less takes action. Let's demand that he and his Republican opponent – and candidates and officials at all levels of government – tell us how they will address climate change. Connect the dots, political leaders.

Linda.

Linda Isaacson Fedele Chairperson, Sierra Club Rochester Regional Group

Our Forum generated much energy and momentum. About 250 attendees heard expert guests Attorney Jim Olson (cofounder of FlowForWater.org), Roger Downs (Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter's Conservation Director) and Rita Yelda (WNY Drilling Defense founder and Food and Water Watch organizer). The bottom line: Hydrofracking, climate change, and water privatization all exacerbate the problem of scarce potable water in a world with increasing population. Water is essential for life, is thus a basic human right, and therefore should be protected in "public trust"

gether at the Public Market to call attention to our "NY apple crop interrupted" problem, due to the early spring heat wave followed by freezing temperatures in April. Connect the Dots (www. climatedots.org) was organized by Bill McKibben's 350.org. McKibben said. "There isn't a country left that



Connecting the dots between extreme weather and climate change at the Rochester Public Market.

Essay Contest for High School Students Winner earns \$100 plus publication of essay!

Are you a high school student or recent 2012 graduate who is concerned about the environment? Here's a chance to win \$100 plus publication of your essay! The Rochester Regional Group of Sierra Club is running an essay contest for high school students or recent graduates (age 18 or under) concerning the most critical environmental problem of our age - climate change. Write an essay on the following topic:

Climate change is a vital topic which should be addressed in election debates.

In the pre-election run-up so far, both political parties have avoided debate on the issue of global warming, but this topic should not be swept under the rug or ignored by politicians. Science is documenting that earth is undergoing huge changes due to our reliance on fossil fuel and other human-related activities. Essays submitted to the contest should address why you think climate change is a vital topic and why it's important for candidates to tell us what they propose to do about it. You may want to consider, for example, some of the predicted effects of climate change such as flooding coastal areas, the loss of bio-diversity, death of critical life-bearing coral reefs, mass migration of humans and scarcity of resources such as food and water. In addition, why do you think political parties are avoiding discussion and debate on the issue? Do corporate interests have any influence here?

Contest Details

- 1. Write an essay of no more than 500 words on the above topic.
- 2. Include your name, address, phone number, school, and the grade level you will be in for the 2012-2013 school year (if you graduated this year, write "2012 graduate").
- 3. Contest deadline for publication in Sierra Club's fall Eco-logue newsletter: August 4, 2012.
- 4. Judging criteria: originality, conciseness, accuracy of facts, inclusion of key ideas, maturity of style. You should consider form and grammar carefully.
- 5. How to submit: Submit essay via e-mail to mitchehp@gmail.com. No entry fee. One essay per student.

Great Lakes Lobbying Days – Washington D.C. February 28 - 29, 2012

by Janet MacLeod, Great Lakes Committee

In past years, other members of our Great Lakes Committee have attended the Great Lakes Lobbying Days in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the Healing Our Waters Coalition. It was a first for me. Only after

having gone there can I now fully appreciate the energy and enthusiasm that others of our committee have expressed upon their return to Rochester! What creates this reaction? The opportunity to learn from seasoned environmentalists and Great Lakes groups who provide their perspectives and knowledge to the mix, along with actually sitting down with New York State representatives face-to-face in their D.C. offices to



Five Mile Point at Lake Superior discuss lake concerns with them.

The pre-lobbying training we received on day one was extremely helpful in not only informing us of all current Great Lakes legislation, but also key issues to focus on in our discussions, along with a good sense of where the parties stand in general regarding Great Lakes issues. We saw representatives in small teams of usually six or seven of us following a well planned meeting schedule - usually allowing about 20 to 30 minutes per visit. Our co-leader and lake property owner, Kate Kremer, was able to offer testimonial in support of the lake level plan (current Plan B, Version 7). Her opportunity to make a statement was very

timely and I believe they listened.

Our first evening culminated with an impressive reception at the Canadian Embassy. And yes, I believe the bulk of our chatting related to our day lobbying, but folks had an opportunity to mingle and sample hearty hors d'oeuvres and yes, drink Canadian beer while networking.

Recycling: But First, a Step Back for Perspective on the Big Picture Part 1 of Recycling Series

by Linda Isaacson Fedele

Seems like there should be an easy answer to the question "What is recyclable and how or where?" but there isn't. The answer is "It depends." It depends on whether it's an individual asking, or a business. It depends on where you live. It depends on whether a hauling company picks up your recyclables, and if so, on which company it is.

Many of our members and readers look to the Sierra Club to educate about what's recyclable. And we are happy to do so, as education is certainly a big part of our mission, especially when the topic is essential to our living lightly on the Earth, like this one is. At the same time, our mission in this area is much larger than education about recycling. Note that we



have a "Zero Waste" committee, not a "Recycling" committee. That signals that the homerun we are shooting for is the minimization of waste in the first place. It's not good enough to only look at the waste stream once it's produced, trying to recycle as much of it

Rochester Sierra Club Outings Summer, 2012

Tuesday, August 14th, 6-8 pm Evening Guided Nature Walk through Three Webster Nature Preserves

Enjoy a summer's evening guided walk through some of our area's finest nature preserves. The Friends of Webster Trails have created marvelous trails which link four different Webster Nature Preserves. Habitats range from the deeply sheltered Vosburg Creek Hollow to the huge Big Field Preserve and the Gosnell Big Woods which contains a sample of old growth trees. Peter Debes, a professional naturalist, nature educator and world traveler will be your guide. The terrain is easy on well developed trails. For adults and youth 14 and older. Bring binoculars, camera, regular walking shoes and sandwich, if you'd like one. Sign-in form

required at start of walk. Call 585-271-4796 in case of inclement weather.

Directions: Meet at the Vosburg Hollow Nature Preserve on Vosburg Rd, Webster.

- Take Bay Road in Webster north to Lake Road
- Proceed right (east) on Lake Rd, Webster, to Vosburg Road which is approximately one mile at a Y on Lake Road.
- Proceed right (east) at the Y on Vosburg Road. Pass Adams Road. The nature preserve is found as you proceed downhill into a hollow. The preserve has a clearly marked sign Vosburg Hollow Nature Preserve.
- Park in the rear of the brick pumping station.

as possible. There's a reason that "reduce, reuse, recycle" is in that order, after all. If we can first minimize materials consumed, then we've saved finite energy sources and materials for possible future use. Once we have used materials, reusing them before casting them aside at least delays their entry into the waste stream. Once they are in the waste stream, recycling them into "new" materials to be used again is better than dumping them in the landfill. So, our true mission is to educate about and advocate for anything and everything

that helps us approach the goal of Zero Waste.

So, starting with the first of the three Rs, how does one go about trying to reduce usage of materials? Here's just one example: Our Zero Waste committee, led by a passionate and knowledgeable volunteer, is working on one very narrowly targeted effort to Reduce. To reduce what? The effort is to reduce the distribution (and hopefully, therefore the printing) of unused phone books. Did you know that you can opt out of receiving phone books? It's not easy, but you can do it. Our project's goal is to make it common knowledge that you can opt out of receiving phone books, and to make it easier to do so. A longer term goal is to require folks to opt in to receiving phone books, as is the case in San Francisco. To opt out of receiving phone books, see www.yellowpagesoptout.com or www.catalogchoice.org. There are several steps; be tenacious and stick with it.

In the next issue, Part 2 of this series will discuss **Recycling: What and How and Where?**

Ganondagan: Living the Tradition of the Seneca

By David Goldman

Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor is the resurrection of the 17th century Seneca Village. The site restoration and preservation adheres to this Iroquois decisionmaking tradition of considering the "welfare of the whole people" seven generations into the future. The staff and membership of Ganondagan are making a concerted

effort to follow the code in our efforts to environmentally protect and preserve the site.

Several programs have been implemented that live within the spirit of the Code. Our waste reduction program was initiated several years ago as a means to reduce the

amount of landfill waste generated at the popular annual Native American Dance & Music Festival and Art Market (www.ganondagan.org/NADMF.html). Thanks to many volunteers, the program has proven to be an overwhelming success by separating waste into compostables, returnables, and recyclables, thereby reducing landfill waste by well over 90 percent! This success has lead to the program being instituted at other Ganondagan events.

Next is the natural cultivation of the Three Sisters (corn, beans, and squash), a method that has been used for thousands of years. Each soil mound is planted with four corn seeds, using only fish bones as a fertilizer. Then, three to four bean plants are placed so that they grow up each stalk of the corn, thus providing nitrogen. Then squash is planted so as to provide shade for the surrounding soil, helping to prevent weeds and retain moisture. With the Three Sisters working together, very little effort is needed on our part, eliminating the need to use fertilizers or pesticides. Another gardening project, the Creator's Garden, teaches the many uses of medicinal and nutritional plants on our site. For over 25 years we've

to: restore grassland communities that represent those features of traditional Oak openings; increase the biodiversity of plants and animals in their natural habitats, many of which are rare and/or endangered; create opportunities for historical and cultural learning as Ganondagan is the only New York state site dedicated to interpreting the history and culture of the

Seneca Nation.



Traditional Seneca Longhouse at Ganodagan

taught and inspired both Native and non-native peoples through seed sharing, workshops, demonstrations, and outreach programming.

A third program is the intended reintroduction and cultivation of white corn at Ganondagan. White corn dates back thousands of years in the Americas. It was the corn grown by the Senecas at Ganondagan until 1687 when the French destroyed the village and its stock of over 500,000 bushels. The intent is to reestablish this healthier corn as part of daily life at Ganondagan through planting, harvesting and processing, as well as providing educational and cultural programming.

One of our most important sustainability projects is the conversion of 67 acres of agricultural land to native warm-season grasslands. The goals of the project are To paraphrase the traditional Seneca Thanksgiving Address: We put our minds together as one and give thanks for the aifts of the earth, the sky, and the Creator that have been given to us. This is the code of Ganondagan. See: www.ganondagan.org.

Newsletter Mailing Party - Join Us!

Got an hour or two to help us get our Fall newsletter ready for mailing? If so, your participation would help us immensely. It's easy, seated work, with the time passing quickly over friendly chatter and some tea. Depending on the size of the group, it can take from oneand-a-half to three hours, but you need stay only as long as you can. It's a fun, no-pressure kind of activity and a good way for new folks to meet some of our active volunteers.

Our next mailing party is: Monday, August 27, 6:30pm

For location: Leave message at 585-234-1056 or email lci_msw@hotmail.com

Hope to meet you there!

Wetlands Alert! Lake Ontario Water Level Plan Bv7

by Kate Kremer, Co-Chair Great Lakes Committee

The International Joint Commission (IJC) has spent years developing a lake level plan that will resume some of the natural water flows and begin to restore the wetlands devastated by years of relatively static lake water levels. In order for this plan to be implemented, the IJC needs to hear that there is broad support. In this effort your voice counts. Please consider the following actions:

- Learn about the plan: The IJC and local environmental groups have made additional information available online about Plan Bv7, a plan currently under consideration for regulating water levels and flows in Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. This information includes:
 - Graphs: http://www.ijc.org/ loslr. Click on Library and then Graphs and Tables.
 - A technical description of Plan Bv7: http://www.ijc. org/loslr. Click on Library and then Reports.
 - Nature Conservancy information regarding Bv7: www. nature.org. Then click on the following: Where We Work
 Regions - North America -Areas - Great Lakes - Policy
 then go to the bottom of the page and click on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.
- Talk to friends who may live or own property along the lake so

they have the facts about the effects of the plan on the environment including the shoreline.

Attend an Information Session: The public will have an opportunity to speak. There will be many voices against this plan due to concerns about boating during low water levels and erosion during high water levels. It will be important to have people speak on the importance of wetland restoration. Please educate vourself about the Bv7 Plan and try to attend one of the information sessions in the area. Consider making comments. Times and locations of Public Information Sessions: http://www.ijc.org/ loslr Click on Public Process and then scroll to the bottom and click on Upcoming Events - view more. Two of the closest locations to Rochester are listed below.

Wed., June 6, 2012 - 7:00 PM Hilton, New York Quest Elementary School

Auditorium, 225 West Ave. Thurs. June 7, 2012 - 7:00 PM

Williamson, New York Williamson High School Auditorium, 5891 Route 21

• Submit Written Comments about Plan Bv7 by June 15: citizens are invited to submit written comments at the information sessions or online: http://www.ijc.org/loslr. Click on Public Process, scroll to the bottom and click on Voice Your Comments – view more.

Wolf Treasure Hunt: A Nature Game for You and Your Kids (ages 4-12)

By Peter Debes, Vice Chair

Here's a fun game you can set up with your kids. Take some vanilla flavoring or something similar, and make a trail around your yard, when you know your kids aren't watching, putting the scent about 2 feet above ground on a series of prominent objects. At the end, hide a "cache" of healthy snacks or some other prize. The kids will have to locate the prize by sniffing out the trail.

But first, have a discussion to see if they know why dogs like to squirt their urine on trees, fire hydrants, etc. This traces back to their ancient roots: wolves. Wolves mark their territories to keep other wolves from eating their food supply. It can be a life-or-starvation matter if they can't defend a large enough territory to feed their young.

Then have your kids create a mask, or head band with ears to simulate a wolf and challenge them to follow a scent trail to a surprise package. For follow-up, see if they can find other examples of creatures that lay scent trails on the web or in books.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFTS: THE LESSER KNOWN FACTS

Your Rochester Regional Group is financially supported by the National Club with a portion of membership fees and by the donations that you send directly to us. Gifts to the "Sierra Club Foundation, Rochester Regional Group" are tax deductible and can be used to help fund newsletter publications and educational programs. You will receive

acknowledgement for the IRS.

Gifts made out simply to "Sierra Club, Rochester Regional Group" are not tax-deductible, but we can use them without restriction— that is, also for legislative advocacy. Please know that your donations, regardless of which type, enable us to make a difference for the environment right here at home. We have very low overhead compared to many organizations - 88.4% of your donation goes directly to support Sierra Club conservation programs. Your support is much appreciated.

Our address is: Sierra Club - Rochester Regional Group P.O. Box 10518 Rochester, NY 14610-0518 By Robbyn McKie-Holzworth, co-chair Great Lakes Committee

It's the beginning of summer and that means time outside seeking a balance of sun exposure and sun protection. We need the production of Vitamin D for health, but we must protect against skin cancer. During the summer, taking a break from our cares helps to recharge us, but please pause before stocking up on sunscreen to understand how our choices fit into the interconnected web of life.

The best sunscreen will always be light clothing, selecting some shade and choosing to not be out during peak sun times. Life doesn't always allow for those options and many thrive in as much sun as possible. With that in mind, sunscreen options have become a big part of summer life. It may seem simple at first glance but learning more about chemical and mineral sunscreens shows that the choice is not as clear cut as we may believe.

Chemical sunscreens are convenient, cheap, and have been developed to keep us from feeling it on our skin. They are also largely unregulated (going on 34 years now), are unstable, can penetrate the skin, can cause al-



lergic reactions, include several petro-chemicals that are carcinogens and endocrine disruptors, and increasingly include untested nanoparticles. Increased use of these sunscreens is resulting in those elements showing up in surface and ground water. Sunscreen concerns may seem insignificant compared to so many other issues we work on, but consider a study from 2010 that estimated 4000-6000 metric tons of sunscreen annually end up in our oceans. Unwittingly, we contribute to this daily dosing of chemicals in our drinking water. Going a bit further, consider that aquatic wild life can't get away from daily dosing of endocrine disruptors and due to non-biodegradable sunscreen residue changing the symbiotic coral/algae relationship, now coral reefs can be stripped of life by our recreation. The cumulative effects of sunscreened swimmers and sunscreen that stays on but gets

washed off at home (thus being sent to waste water treatment facilities) can't be ignored.

So what about mineral sunscreens? Non-nanoparticle mineral sunscreens look to be more stable, don't penetrate the skin, are less likely to cause allergic reactions and are not endocrine disruptors. This looks to be good news but nothing seems to be without consequence. Mineral sunscreens must be dug out of the ground and that mining leads to erosion, deforestation, water and air pollution. Mineral and biodegradable sunscreens tend to be more expensive, may leave a white coating on your skin, and aren't always as convenient as their chemical counterparts.

Now what? Make informed choices. Read product labels. Follow up by reading up. Ewg. org, safecosmetics.org, National Geographic, Slate magazine, and Sierra Club Green Home are websites with good information on chemicals to avoid and suggestions to try. This article was compiled from these sites.

In the end, nothing works in isolation. Making slight modifications to individual behavior can have an impact on our health and environment, yet still allow for summer fun and adventure!

A Midsummer's Evening Stroll in Central Brighton

By Sara Rubin Chair, Wetlands Committee

As you may know, the Brighton School District recently was the recipient of three different grants that allowed the remediation of a portion of the small channelized Buckland Creek that runs between the high school and the middle school at Twelve Corners in Brighton. The creek has been reconstructed toward a more natural flow, with the addition of boulders and riffles, and the riparian edge has been planted with 1,000 stream-side native plants! As well as improving water quality and establishing more wildlife habitat in central Brighton, the plantings are looking very beautiful right now, and invite visitors. The best place to access the creek is at the Winton Rd. entrance to the high school, parking available in the circle in front of the high school, if after school hours.



Buckland Creek as it looks today. It will take a few years for the plantings to get established, but the area is beautiful during these beginning stages!



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ndar TIME-SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Summer 2012 Calendar

All Committees are local volunteer groups of the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club

Date	Day	Time	Calendar/Event	Place
June 5	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
June 9	Saturday	9 am - 4 pm	ADK Outdoor Expo	Mendon Ponds Park
June 10	Sunday	9 am - 1 pm	Brighton Energy Fair	Brighton High School parking lot
June 11	Monday	6:30 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Crossroads Coffeehouse 752 South Goodman St.
June 26	Tuesday	4:30 pm	Zero Waste Committee	Rochester Greenovation 1199 E. Main St. (Tour of this facility, followed by meeting)
June 26	Tuesday	TBD	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	TBD: Call Robbyn at 585-738-3242 for de- tails. No meetings in July or August. Email Robbyn at travelbyrd@yahoo.com for info on how to get involved over the summer.
July 3 (likely)	Tuesday (likely)	TBD	Executive Committee Meeting	TBD: Call the Sierra Club at 585-234-1056 for information on date, time, and location
July 9	Monday	7:00 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Crossroads Coffeehouse 752 South Goodman St.
July 24	Tuesday	4:30 pm	Zero Waste Committee	494 East Ave
July 28	Saturday	10 am - 6 pm	Ganodagan Native American Dance & Music Festival	Ganondagan State Historic Site 1488 Victor-Bloomfield Rd,. Victor, NY
July 29	Sunday	10 am - 6 pm	Ganodagan Native American Dance & Music Festival	Ganondagan State Historic Site 1488 Victor-Bloomfield Rd,. Victor, NY
August 7 (likely)	Tuesday (likely	TBD	Executive Committee Meeting	TBD: Call the Sierra Club at 585-234-1056 for information on date, time, and location
August 13	Monday	7:00 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Crossroads Coffeehouse 752 South Goodman St.
August 14	Tuesday	6:00-8:00 pm	Sierra Club Outing: Evening Guided Nature Walk Through Three Webster Nature Preserves	Vosburg Hollow Nature Preserve Vosburg Rd., Webster
August 27	Monday	6:30 pm	Newsletter Mailing Party	For location, e-mail lci_msw@hotmail.com or leave a message at 585-234-1056
August 28	Tuesday	4:30 pm	Zero Waste Committee	494 East Ave

All Executive Committee meetings are open to Sierra Club members.

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