



Sierra Club President Comes to Rochester For 2017 Environmental Forum

by Peter Debes

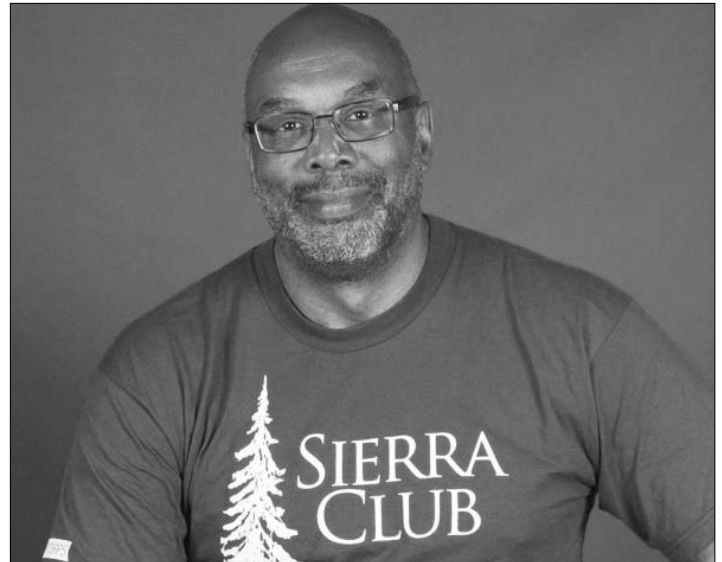
This year, your Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club is bringing a distinguished advocate for environmental justice to Rochester. He is Aaron Mair, the President of the Sierra Club and a powerful speaker that can inspire our community. Our hope is that this can be a ground breaking event for Rochester bringing together the white progressive community with the communities of color. Aaron has a long history in working for environmental change. He succeeded in shutting down a dirty incinerator plant in Albany, NY by revealing how pollution was causing sickness in the people of color who lived around it. (read more online: Aaron Mair elected President).

The Sierra Club at the National level as well as the local level realize that having a predominantly white organization is wrong. We recognize environmental issues affect everyone and disproportionately, African Americans, Latinos, and low-income people. We also realize immediate change is necessary. This is a difficult task but we are willing and committed to learn how. To advance this cause, our keynote speaker is the first African American to be elected president of the Sierra Club.

Aaron will speak to us about **Intersectionality and Building a Strong Climate Movement.**

“Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage...Activists must consider their own social position, role and power when taking an intersectional approach. This consideration should be in place before setting priorities and directions for our activism.” (Olena Hankivsky)

This collaborative approach will assure a movement strong enough to stop irreversible climate disruption and secure a clean energy future. The good news is we are already on the way. A large majority of Americans want us to move toward a clean energy economy and want climate action now.



Aaron Mair, President of The Sierra Club

Aaron will be in Rochester to give his presentation on Thursday, April 20th from 7-9 PM at the New Bethel CME Church located at 270 Scio Street, Rochester, NY 14605. Come early to visit tables of local environmental groups to find out what they are doing in our area from 6-6:30 PM. This event is free and open to the public.

He will also be addressing classes at the University of Rochester and Rochester Institute of Technology. You can find a schedule on our Facebook page early April.

We are very excited the opportunity has arrived to join forces with the communities of color on the issues that affect us all. Please join us.

“Add me to your list”



We are putting together a fast action network for rapid notification of the Sierra Club Rochester Regional Group’s events and actions.

Submit your email address to receive updates! Send us a message at sierraclub.rrg@gmail.com.

Use in the subject line: “Add me to your list”.



From the Chair: Hope, Passion, Dedication

About seven years ago, I was looking for ways to get locally involved in environmental action, so I reached out to the executive committee of the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club to see if I could be of any assistance. This proved to be great timing for all of us, because the committee was knee-deep in planning activities for the 2010 Environmental forum. I was thrown right into a whirlwind of planning activities, calling and emailing roughly a hundred local organizations, and working with a team to develop the agenda and promote the event.

On the day of the event, I played a thousand little roles and had the opportunity to witness the enthusiasm for positive change that the audience exuded. This experience made me feel more hopeful for our planet's future than I ever had before. I had no idea that there were so many passionate, dedicated people in my community.

That hope, passion, and dedication led me to commit myself to the Rochester Regional Group. I served as the club's newsletter editor for the September 2010 – March 2016 issues. And now, as we prepare for the 2017 Environmental Forum: Intersectionality and Building a Stronger Climate Movement, I am the newly-elected chair of the executive committee.

I take on this role at a time when our work is more important than ever. We likely face unprecedented opposition to the actions that the scientific community has proven we must take in order to ensure the survival of our planet and the health of the flora and fauna that call it home. It is so easy to lose hope at a time like this, but I will not, because over the past few weeks I have

seen how opposition awakens passion and dedication in millions of people, driving them to actively work toward making a difference.

We have seen this awakening in Rochester first-hand, with greater interest than ever before from members of our community wanting to work with the Sierra Club. People want to do *something*, and they want to do it *now*. It's inspiring.

Our executive committee has been working on a strategy for engagement: actions that people can take, projects they can participate in or lead, and politicians/organizations/media outlets they can call or write to. We hope to host a meeting soon for people to come together, learn about opportunities, and make a difference. Once plans are made, we will share them on our Facebook page and website, and we'll send an email to all members.

If you're interested in helping us plan this or would like to participate in the Sierra Club in some other way, such as participating in activities leading up to or on the day of the Environmental Forum on April 20th, please let us know! You can email me or any other member of the executive committee, or you can leave a message for us (585) 234-1056.

Thank you all for your support, and I look forward to working with you.

Jessica Slaybaugh
Jessica.A.Slaybaugh@gmail.com

Letter to The Editor:

Submitted by Tod Eagle

Thank you. Your article, "On Buying or leasing an Electric Car: What Works for You?", was appropriate for this audience and appreciated. I respect that you did some research for the piece and the information will be useful to readers with an interest in EV transportation.

As a Tesla owner for the last year in a rural area of greater Rochester, I have been both amazed by the interest friends and strangers have had in our car. It is a rare sighting for this area and generates a lot of inquiry. Most have the same apprehensions you express in your article, "How far can you go?" and "What do you do if it runs out of power?" Though the

Tesla has a 250 mile range which is not troublesome, I imagine all EV car owners adjust as easily to managing the range of their vehicles as gas consumers manage their fill ups. Thoughtful drivers don't run out of gas, nor do thoughtful EV drivers run out of electricity. With a Tesla long range trips are quite easy as there are nearly 600 supercharging stations throughout the country and new ones opening every month. These provide up to 170 EPA miles of range in less than 30 minutes of charging, and the electricity is free! A trip to the Adirondacks from Rochester would require one stop of about 20 to 30 minutes which is likely the typical Thruway rest stop gas-lunch-

potty-break. Between Rochester and Lake George, for example, there are four supercharging stations. The GPS on these cars also design all of your trips to consider recharging needs and options. There are dozens of charging locations around our area that I was completely unaware of until I became an EV owner: municipalities, businesses, car dealerships, parking garages, etc. and most are free. In 14,000 miles of travel this year to Maine, the Jersey Shore, and often to the Adirondack area, I have never had to pay for any charging!

Most EV owners have installed chargers



(cont'd on page 7)

Save the Date!

MARCH 23TH

I Want To Do Something

The Sierra Club has received a flood of interest from people who are worried about climate change, environmental justice and the future of our planet. The Rochester Regional Group has a history of leadership on these issues. We are ready to help you get started. Come to a community meeting for members and friends. You will learn about actions already in progress and help strategize new actions. We are eager to hear your ideas in this time of crisis. Your energy and support will make a world of difference.

Also look on Facebook and our website for updates of actions and events you can join.



**A place to speak your mind where
your voice will be heard**

Thursday, March 23rd

6-8 PM

Brighton Town Park Carmen Clark Lodge
777 Westfall Road, Brighton, NY 14620



facebook.com/SierraROC



sierraclub.org/atlantic/rochester

Save the Date!

APRIL 20TH

Please join us for

The 19th Annual Environmental Forum **Intersectionality and Building a Strong Climate Movement**

Thursday, April 20th, 6-9 PM

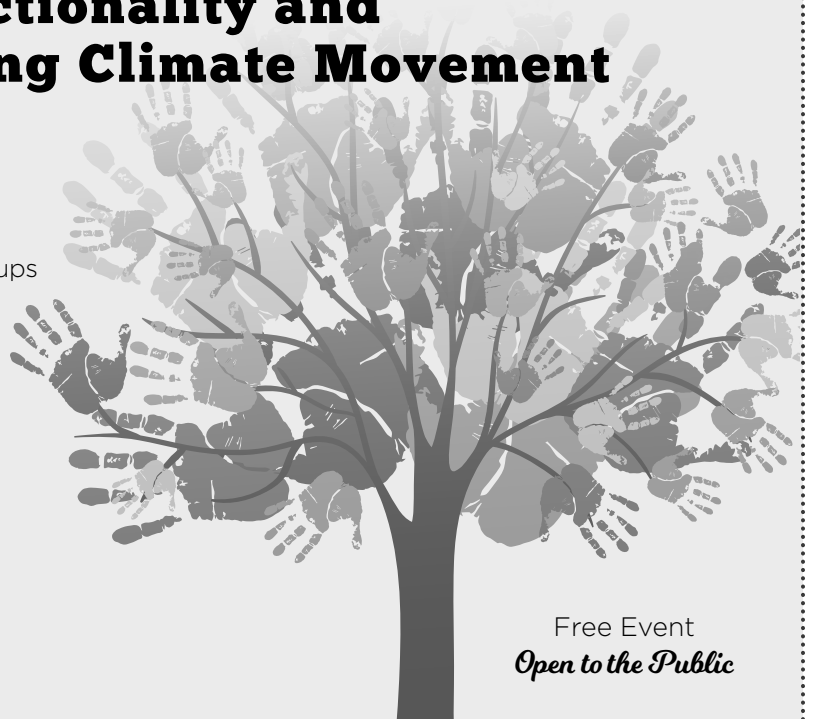
6 - 6:30 PM

Visit table displays of local environmental groups

6:30 - 8:30 PM

Keynote presentation by
Aaron Mair, President of The Sierra Club

New Bethel CME Church
270 Scio Street, Rochester, NY 14605



Free Event
Open to the Public

Wednesday, April 19th

Additional Speaking Engagements:

Noon-1pm Intro to Environmental Science
UR River Campus, Bausch & Lomb Hall 109

1-2pm The Evan Dawson Show
WXXI Connections - 1370AM WRUR - 88.5FM

For More Information

EMAIL: sierraclub.rrg@gmail.com WEB: sierraclub.org/atlantic/rochester FB: facebook.com/SierraROC

Styrofoam Petition

by Matthew Brennan

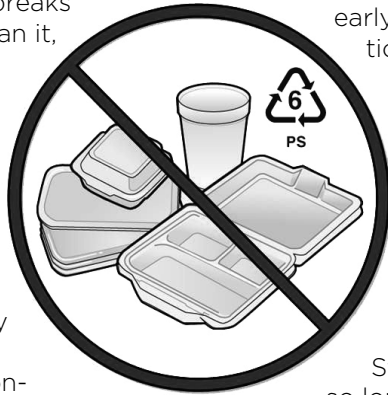
It is time to eliminate expanded polystyrene foam (commonly known as Styrofoam) from Monroe County. As the federal government turns its back on environmental conservation, local citizens must pick up the slack.

Despite the little 6 found on the bottom of most Styrofoam products, Styrofoam is virtually impossible to recycle. In Monroe County, Styrofoam is not accepted at curbside pick-up. Persistent individuals aiming to recycle packing Styrofoam can deliver it to the Monroe County EcoPark near the airport, but single-use food containers remain unrecyclable. According to the EcoPark's website: "Styrofoam meat trays, egg cartons, coffee cups, takeout containers or other small post-consumer items have no local recycling option and should be placed in your trash." This is partially because Styrofoam breaks down so easily that, if someone tried to clean it, all they would get is a mess of tiny beads.

So what? One more small item in the trash. The problem is that Styrofoam does not decompose. Not on a human time scale, anyway. This means that every Styrofoam coffee cup thrown out will continue to occupy space virtually forever; add that to the fact that roughly 25 billion Styrofoam coffee cups are thrown in the trash annually and the problem starts to become evident. In fact, Styrofoam consumes a disproportionately large amount of space in landfills because it has such high volume compared to its mass. Ten pounds of Styrofoam takes up about as much space as a household refrigerator in a landfill. The same



“Despite the little 6 found on the bottom of most Styrofoam products, [it] is virtually impossible to recycle.”



problem makes it difficult to store in/transport to proper recycling facilities.

A landfill might be the best case scenario, though. Because it is so light, Styrofoam is easily swept away by the wind into waterways, roadways, parks and other areas. Styrofoam photo-degrades, meaning that sunlight causes it to break up into smaller and smaller pieces, making it increasingly difficult to clean up and more likely to confuse a small animal into eating it.

Styrofoam is made of fossil fuels and other chemicals. Buying it supports an industry that contributes to climate change. Incinerating it, as

happens in certain waste facilities, releases its dangerous components into the atmosphere. There is some research that suggests that Styro-foam poses more direct threats to human health, as well. In the early 1980's, the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) found styrene, the primary molecular building block of Styrofoam, in 100% of human fat samples collected in every state in the continental US. In 2011, the US Department of Health and Human Services classified styrene as a carcinogen. Sufficient heat, possibly the quantity generated by a fresh cup of coffee, could allow that styrene to leach into beverages and be consumed.

Styrofoam has remained so prevalent for so long because it is cheap and effective at retaining heat. That hardly seems redeeming for all the problems it causes.

This is an opportunity to make a significant difference at the local level. In 2014, Albany County enacted a Styrofoam ban. It is long overdue for Monroe County. If you are a registered voter in Monroe County, please consider signing the online petition (URL below) and please make sure to include your address; if local lawmakers do not think that their constituents care about this, then neither will they.

SIGN OUR PETITION ON CHANGE.ORG

The online petition can be found at:



www.change.org/p/monroe-county-legislature-ban-eps-aka-styrofoam-from-monroe-county-ny?recruiter=679147010&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink

To read the specific text of Albany County's ban, please use the following URL:



www.albanycounty.com/Libraries/Department_of_Health/Styrofoam_Rules_and_Regulations_Final_3.sflb.ashx

Justice Has Many Names

by Robert Withers

All of known life in the universe occurs within 400 million cubic miles of air, dirt and water known as the biosphere. It seems like a big number until you realize it must contain all of life and all of its activities for all of time. There are seven billion of us, soon to be nine billion, living on this planet. Each of us wanting and deserving of a healthy, happy, productive and peaceful life for ourselves, our families and for those that are yet to be born. Although it is possible and can be done sustainably we have fallen well short of a small fraction achieving these goals. We will not get there using greed as our guide.

We stand on the edge of catastrophe. We have almost removed hope for future generations to achieve any of these goals. We have come to

understand the interrelated nature of all life. We have come to recognize the interrelated nature of all people. It's time to honor the interrelated nature of all issues.

A sustainable environment can not exist without a sustainable economy. A sustainable economy can not exist without environmental and social justice. Justice has many names but it reaches all. Justice has many effects but it is best for all. Justice can not be blind, indeed, it must see far into the future without forgetting the past.

A sustainable democracy can not exist without an educated, informed,

empowered and involved citizenry. Again we have fallen short. There are those to whom fact is fiction and fiction fact. There are those to whom common sense is all to

uncommon. Injustice has become justice, greed a virtue and lies are the new truth.

It is the moment of truth that has arrived

however. It is us, the people alive now, the people making decisions now, that will determine the future. Will we allow greed and ignorance to be our guide or will we seek justice as our guide to a brighter future for all? It is up to US. Join US.

“Justice can not be blind, indeed, it must see far into the future without forgetting the past.”



Photo courtesy of Robert Withers

January 21, 2017. Women's March on Washington Rally: Washington Square Park, Rochester, NY.

ACTIVIST CHECKLIST

- Go to the rally
- Write the letter
- Sign the petition
- Post a comment
- Share your ideas
- Attend the event
- Research the issues
- Educate yourself
- Inform others

Eco-Friendly Alternatives to Styrofoam

Mushroom Packaging
made of agricultural waste mixed with mushroom fungus

Plantable Packaging
made of seeds mixed with recycled paper

Edible Packing Peanuts
made completely of cornstarch

Eco Bowl
made of powdered bamboo fiber mixed with resin

EarthShell Plates
made of rice, potatoes, and limestone

Loliware Edible Cups
made of plant gelatin

ecotainer® Cups
made of recycled plants and wood fibers



Save the Date!

APRIL 29TH

The People's Climate Mobilization March

Washington DC

Rochester People's Climate Coalition (RPCC) will send buses of Rochester area residents to DC to participate in this historic climate march. For more info about the DC Climate March visit peoplesclimate.org.

Rochester NY

RPCC is also coordinating a local event here at home for those who won't be traveling to DC. Join us 11 am at Washington Square Park.



For information and updates about getting to DC on the bus and about the local festivities, see rocpc.com and/or email rocpc@gmail.com.

In 2014, we said that to change everything, we need everyone. Now, with everything at stake, everyone has a part to play.

Save the Date!

JUNE 10TH

Outdoor Expo 2017



WORKSHOP

Wetland Variety & Ecology in Mendon Ponds Park

Come with naturalist and Sierra Club member Peter Debes to learn about the surprising, vital and interrelated life in the wetlands of Mendon Ponds Park.

The event schedule is coming soon. Visit adk.org and sierraclub.org/atlantic/chapter for updates and presentation time.

JUNE 10TH | 9:30am-3:30pm



Rochester People's Climate Coalition

RPCC was born out of the local success of sending over 100 Rochester area residents to the first People's Climate March in the Fall of 2014, and is now comprised of over 100 local organizations collaborating on local climate solutions.

See rocpc.com to have your organization become a member of RPCC or to sign up for our newsletter as an individual. Together, we'll create a more environmentally just and sustainable community.



Photo courtesy of Linda Isaacson Fedele

Nov. 29, 2015. Frederick Douglass-Susan B. Anthony Memorial Bridge: Rochester March for Global Climate Action, organized by RPCC.

Letter to The Editor:

(cont'd from page 2)

at home (typically a 40 amp charges 40-52 miles of range per hour) and we charge at night when electric rates are lowest for our daily driving. That daily mileage range is likely the most determinate factor as to the model/range EV that would be a practical acquisition for a driver. With many companies now installing work site chargers, range anxiety severely diminishes for many commuters.

I know the Tesla is pricey but it replaced a 10 year old "luxury" sedan in our household and will likely be ours for the next 10 years. Its battery warranty is for unlimited mileage for 8 years. We elect to use wind generated electricity from the grid which is a bit more expensive, so with taxes included we pay about 12 cents per Kwh. The car gets about 3.5 miles per Kwh, which makes it about 8 cents cheaper per mile to move than a gas

powered car. It also requires no oil or other engine maintenance. The Federal tax credit was \$7500. We have substantially reduced our carbon footprint and have the added benefit of enjoying the fastest production car in the world that is also self driving and incredibly safe, and it has all wheel drive for Rochester's winters.

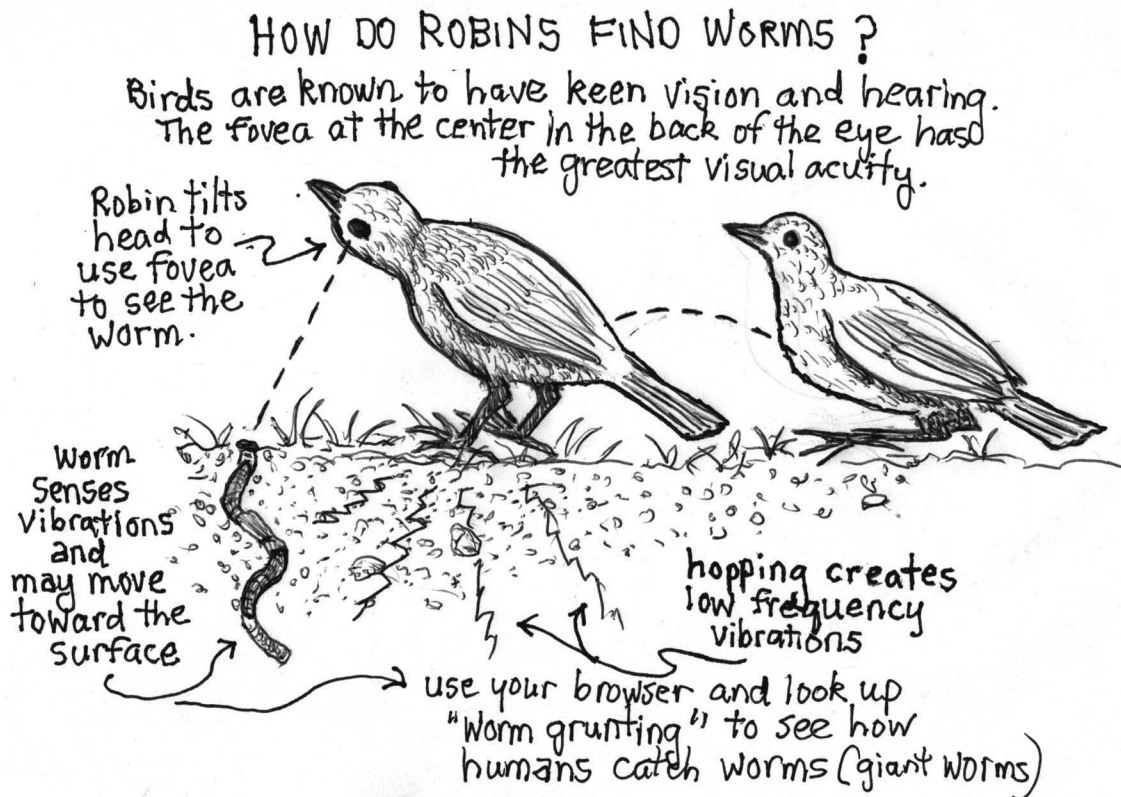
With new EV models on the horizon becoming more affordable, it is imperative that environmentally conscious consumers begin to understand that transitioning to EV's can be no more traumatic than the transition to energy saving light bulbs. Some of the reservations you mentioned in your article are easily accommodated by planning and appropriate EV model selection. Overcoming the mind set of "comfort" with fossil fuel burning cars requires we discover these easy

answers; the auto manufacturers and gas suppliers aren't going to be the source of our enlightenment. The large oil and automobile corporations have had decades to create an "American automobile culture" that powerfully influences consumer thinking. Environmentally sound and satisfying alternatives exist for consumers; the only barriers are their understanding of the options. There are already countries in the world that have more EV charging stations than gas stations, so the learning curve can't be that steep.

I would imagine that most Sierra Club families, like most American families, have two or more vehicles. If even one of those cars could become an EV in the near future we would be well on our way to a cleaner, healthier environment.

Naturalist's Corner

by Peter Debes





**Rochester Regional Group
of the Sierra Club
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585-234-1056
www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/rochester
Find the Rochester Regional Group
on Facebook and LinkedIn!

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Spring 2017 Calendar

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

Date	Day	Time	Meeting/Event	Place
March 23	Thursday	6:00-8:00pm	Community Meet & Greet	Brighton Town Park Carmen Clark Lodge, Brighton, 14618
April 4	Tuesday	6:30-8:30pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., 400 Andrews St., Ste 600
April 20	Thursday	6:00-9:00pm	Annual Environmental Forum: Intersectionality & Building A Strong Climate Movement	New Bethel CME Church 270 Scio Street, Rochester, NY 14605
April 29	Thursday	All Day	People's Climate Mobilization March	Washington, DC & Rochester, NY
May 2	Tuesday	6:30-8:30pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., 400 Andrews St., Ste 60
June 10	Saturday	9:30am-3:30pm	ADK Outdoor Expo	Mendon Ponds Park



Follow us on Facebook to keep up-to-date on new events throughout the year.
www.facebook.com/SierraROC

Executive Committee meetings are open to Sierra Club members. All other meetings are open to everyone.

The Eco-Logue is printed on 100% recycled paper with green plant-based toner.