



eco-logue

Explore, enjoy
and protect
the planet

ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP

Volume 37, No. 4
Sept./Oct. 2007

Sierra Club Free Movie & Talk

The Oil Crunch: The Challenge No One is Talking About
Thursday, September 20, 2007 at 7:00pm - Brighton Library
2200 Elmwood Avenue, Brighton

The rise in world oil prices since 2004 is a symptom of a very serious problem that few people recognize: worldwide demand for oil racing ahead of supply. Lou Grinzo, a local energy expert, will explain what's going on and how we can all play a role in dealing with all of the increasing costs of oil dependency.

According to Grinzo, "My goal is to help spread the word that global warming isn't the only major threat we're facing. The continued rise of oil prices--The Oil Crunch--will be an enormous problem, especially in the next 15 years, as it forces us to reevaluate and change almost every part of our economy. It's a challenge we

must, can, and will meet, but the sooner people understand what's going on, what it means, and what they can do about it beginning today, the better it will be for everyone."

Come to the Brighton Library at 7:00PM on Thursday, September 20 and learn about this important issue. It's free and open to the public.

Thirst*

A film about one of the world's most critical resources

7:00 PM, Thursday, October 18, 2007 Brighton Library, 2300 Elmwood Avenue, Brighton

Is water part of a shared "commons?" A Human right for all people? Or is it a commodity to be bought, sold and traded in a global marketplace? Thirst tells the stories of committees in Japan, Bolivia, India, and the United States that are asking these fundamental questions as water becomes the most

valuable commodity of the 21st century.

"Thirst is a remarkable film. The looming freshwater crisis is the greatest environmental and human rights crisis of our time. Not surprisingly, the move is on by powerful corporations and governments to commodify and cartelize the world's water supplies for

power and profit. Thirst is the story of this assault and the fight to stop it."
- Maude Barlow, Chair, Council of Canadians and Co-author, Blue Gold.

Laura Arney will present the film and lead a brief discussion afterwards. The program will end at 8:45PM

Nature Discoveries: Pictures of a Lifetime

Sierra Club Fall Festival and Fun Raiser

Saturday, September 29th, 5pm – 9pm at Tay House*

This year's Fall Festival features outstanding nature photos from around the world with a talk given by naturalist Peter Debes. Also included will be an advanced look at a film trailer on Hemlock Lake.

Wine & cheese, a light supper, desert & coffee, nature show, all for only \$10.

Have you ever wanted to see the Galapagos, the blue-crowned motmot of Trinidad, or Sicily in the Spring? On Saturday, September 29th, the Sierra Club will hold our annual Fall Festival

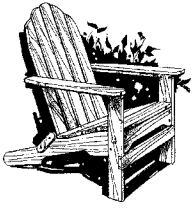
featuring nature photos and a talk by Peter Debes. Peter is an outstanding nature photographer, naturalist, and lecturer. You won't want to miss seeing his breathtaking pictures shot during his many "Nature Discovery" expeditions to various parts of the world. Along with the pictures Peter will include interesting educational and environmental commentaries and stories.

At 5 pm, the festival will start with wine, cheese, a light supper, desert,

coffee and friendly sharing with fellow environmentalists. At about 6:15pm we will be treated to the first showing of a trailer film on Conesus and Hemlock Lakes. The film is now in production by local film maker Chris Williams. Following this Peter Debes will show his photos and give an educational talk.

Tickets are only \$10 per person or \$25 max for larger families. Checks can be made out to Sierra Club and sent to the Sierra Club, Rochester Regional
(continued on page 2)

From the Chair



by Deb Muratore

On 7/7/07 I watched most of the Live Earth concert and was amazed

that I'd never heard of most of the performers. But I was blown away by the sheer size – the depth and breadth of the co-coordinated effort of the musicians who played on all 7 continents, the 7 Point Pledge and the amount of environmental information disseminated. For more information about what you can do please check out www.liveearth.org/.

It really seemed like the whole world was watching and there was going to be this momentous paradigm shift that we'd all see, feel and hear! It didn't quite happen as I had imagined. Changes some times only happen in baby steps. As simply as I think I live – I made 2 changes: I unplugged my cell phone charger and only plug it in when I'm charging my phone; and I finished replacing the balance of my light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. These actions made me feel that I'd made a difference with very little effort.

The direction I'm planning to take the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club is to plant one or more trees someplace in Rochester, in the spring to help reduce our carbon foot prints. This is point #6 of the Pledge. I'd like to tie it in as a memorial to friends and family of the Sierra Club. Possibly working with the City of Rochester to plant trees and place a memorial plaque on a tree. I haven't worked out all the details yet.

Please contact me with any suggestions or to offer any assistance in this effort

Rochester Sierra Club Group Positions on Water Issues

by Hugh Mitchell

This fall we expect a number of major regional decisions will be made on the future of our water supplies. These decisions will include the following possibilities: the city selling Hemlock/Canadice lands, the city selling the Water Bureau and all water holdings, and Monroe County Water Authority building a new Eastside water treatment plant. The Sierra Club has been keenly following these developments for years. In the interest of controlling the growth of sprawl in the region, we published our first paper about the Monroe County Water Authority titled Sprawl Follows the Pipes. Subsequently our ExCom has published a number of other papers on water topics. Our Executive Committee has developed the statements below summarizing our positions (and the positions we recommend other groups consider) on the future of potable water in the region.

1) Sprawl follows the pipes, so we do not approve or support additional, poorly planned expansion of the

regional water pipe infrastructure by Monroe County Water Authority.

2) The proposed new MCWA Eastside Webster water filtration plant is unneeded at this time and should be delayed until a need is proven.

3) The City should retain ownership and use of their high quality, gravity fed water infrastructure and they should continue to operate an independent Water Bureau.

4) The City should seek to renew the 30-year water sharing contract with Monroe County Water Authority with a profit to the city.

5) New York State should buy the Hemlock/Canadice upland watershed and adjacent lands so as to preserve these in a semi-wild state with no commercial or residential development.

6) To assure the public better accountability, the Monroe County Water Authority should be eliminated with future management turned over to Monroe County supervised by democratically elected representatives.

Durand Beach Cleanup

by Jamie Romeo

This year's Beach Cleanup will be held on Saturday, September 15th at Durand Eastman Beach starting at 9:00AM. Jamie Romeo will again be the beach captain for the Durand Eastman Beach shoreline site of the International Coastal Cleanup Event in Monroe County. The Rochester Regional Group of Sierra Club is invited to come and have a presence at the beach. If possible, bring heavy-duty gloves, a clipboard, clothes that can get dirty, and an open mind. If you have any questions please call Jamie at 585-309-8148 or e-mail her at jl6440@yahoo.com. Hope to see you at the beach!

(Fall Festival continued)

Group, PO Box 39516, Rochester, N.Y. 14604 or payment can be made at the door, but RSVP if paying at the door by calling Sierra Club 234-1056 to reserve your supper.

* Directions to Tay House Lodge at Cobbs Hill Park:

From South Winton Road, turn west onto Hillside Ave. Continue three blocks to School #1.

From Culver Road, take Cobbs Hill Park road (Norris Drive) through Cobbs Hill Park. At the Monroe County Water Authority branch right onto Hillside Ave. and look for School #1.

Tay House is behind the School. Parking is available near Tay House.

Wind Generators and Birds

By Peter Debes*

I am a professional naturalist who developed a passion for nature at a young age by observing and learning about birds. I prize the beauty of natural vistas unmarred by human activity. Yet I enjoy the conveniences and comforts of modern appliances and rely on the energy sources we have to run them. My experience with installing electricity in a primitive hunting camp may offer a useful analogy for thinking about wind generators.

At first, I was against installing the electricity. I enjoyed the work of cutting wood and using it to cook and heat the cabin. Soon we replaced the wood stove with an electric one and a space heater. We were no longer in a perpetual aroma of wood smoke. I was soon surprised to notice that the mysterious affliction that had been plaguing the trees around the cabin causing them to die prematurely, had ceased. There were

also more species of birds nesting near the cabin after the switch to electricity. Apparently the soot and chemicals in the smoke had been causing the death of the trees and making it unsuitable habitat for birds as well. So now, we have utility poles and wires... but a better natural environment for birds.

It is obvious that we Americans could make huge reductions in the energy we consume by pursuing an aggressive program of conservation. Yet even with this, we will still need energy. As my wood stove story demonstrates, cleaner sources of energy should be our preference to reduce the harmful impacts of our lives on the planet. So far, attempts to expand the use of coal or nuclear power still pose major risks to the environment, either directly or through the uncertainties of waste management. That is why wind energy is such an attractive choice, even though some birds will be lost.

A wonderful thing about we humans is the way we rise to the challenge collectively to solve problems, and the amazing creativity we have to devise solutions. Experiments are being done to test ways to reduce the loss of birds such as using special paint on the rotor blades, using tubular towers, and installing anti-perching devices on crossbars. I am sure there will be more.

So we must be creative in balancing aesthetics with practicality and tolerate in certain areas such things as wind generators for a greater good. Let us all strive too, to reserve and protect areas in every region where one may still go to experience unmarred natural scenery and have that irreplaceable and awe inspiring wilderness experience.

*Peter Debes has been leading natural history study tours to national parks of the USA and other countries for over 20 years.

Book Study Club

The next meeting of the Book Study Club is September 10 at 7:00PM at the Friends Meeting House, 84 Scio St. Free parking is available at the East End Garage

The next book is *The World is Flat* by Thomas Friedman. Deb called Greenwood Books (123 East Ave 325-2050) and ordered about five copies of the paperback book. They should be in now. They are giving the Sierra Club Book Study Group a 10% discount. We'll discuss the first half of *The World is Flat* on September 10 and the second half on October 8. The October 8 meeting will also be at Friends Meeting House 84 Scio Street at 7:00PM.

David is taking a sabbatical and Janet has graciously agreed to be our new organizer. She has reserved the Friends Meeting House for the balance of the year and will send out an e-mail a week before the meeting to remind everyone.

ExCom Nominations Now Open

Our Executive Committee (or "ExCom" in short parlance) is composed of 12 environmentalists. Six members are elected each year, so we now have six openings on the Board. Why not consider running for office? The commitment is not as onerous as you might imagine and our meetings can be a lot of fun since we are all friends and don't bite. We meet for two hours each month, usually on the second Tuesday. Many ExCom members (but not all) choose to head up a committee like the administrative ones or conservation. Others serve "at large" and choose to add their voice and vote on environmental concerns.

In the past, a number of people interested in doing something about conservation, who have not had much prior experience with leadership, have joined the board. It's a great way to work with a group and sharpen your

leadership skills. Training and guidance are available. In fact, some of our Ex-Com members have gone to the national headquarters of the Sierra Club in San Francisco for training - with most expenses paid.

If you are interested in learning more about seeking a nomination for the ExCom or if you have a Sierra Club friend who you think would make a good board member, please call or e-mail Hugh Mitchell, Nominations Committee. (585) 244-2625. goshawk@frontiernet.net Nominations close on October 15th.

Future Changes in Russell Station Power Plant

by Keri Kaminsky

Russell Station in Greece is one of the dirtiest coal burning power plants in the state. Because Russell Station's owner, Rochester Gas and Electric, had been noncompliant with emissions limits for six years, in the fall of 2006 the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and then Attorney General Elliot Spitzer served RG&E with intent to sue. RG&E then announced it would be shutting down Russell Station after the completion of a transmission line upgrade that would deliver electricity to those areas served by Russell Station. This past spring the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) issued a report, Power Trends 2007, which projected a shortfall in electricity supply at times of peak demand in this area by 2012. NYISO is a federally regulated, 501(c) 3 non-profit corporation responsible for operating the electricity grid and administering wholesale markets for electricity and transmission products. Companies such as RG&E are required to come up with solutions for meeting projected increase in demand. On May 1, 2007, RG&E announced its plans to rebuild the Russell Station site into a "cleaner" coal burning or natural gas fired power plant. If they decide to build the coal plant, it will emit significantly lower levels of pollutants such as mercury and sulfur dioxide, but carbon dioxide emissions would be virtually unchanged.

The Sierra Club Global Warming and Energy Committee is working to persuade RG&E that **they can benefit by utilizing** forward-thinking, economically and environmentally sound mechanisms to meet the projected shortfall. Conducting

business in an environmentally sensitive way is economically smart because CO2 emissions will become expensive as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is implemented and as carbon taxes are levied. Also, consumers are beginning to demand clean technology from their power suppliers. Additionally, fossil fuel sources are finite, and obtaining and transporting them is a costly and energy intensive process.

According to Power Trends 2007, page 17, "Proposals can be in the form of... demand response programs, transmission projects, market rule changes, operating procedure changes..." In particular, demand reduction can and should be a part of the plan. If demand is curtailed, additional time becomes available for research, planning, and implementation of clean generation technologies. Demand response programs and large scale education campaigns targeted at both consumers and businesses have proven to be effective. California's Flex Your Power Program has reduced electricity demand by nearly 5000 MW.

RG&E already plans to implement real-time metering, which will give consumers a financial incentive to conserve energy at peak demand times. In addition, there are new technologies to mitigate peak demand that RG&E can promote.

Finally, newer but proven clean generation technologies (wind, biomass, geothermal, solar, etc.) can and should be a part of the plan to meet the projected shortfall. Coupling these newer technologies with demand reduction strategies makes sense because a smaller output becomes viable. Utilizing these

new technologies does not pose a significant financial risk because Iberdrola (which has offered to purchase Energy East) has a proven track record in, and affinity for clean technologies such as wind power. At the same time, a major positive difference in health, jobs, and the environment resulting from implementing newer technologies would benefit the local community. Renewable technologies do not require the continued mining and transport of fuel material. Funding and subsidies are available for clean power technology projects. They may also be able to partner with the city, county, or local town as was done with the Combined Heat and Power systems at the Greater Rochester International Airport, Monroe Community Hospital, Monroe Community College, and the new Mill Seat Landfill Methane generation facility in Riga. Finally, local technological know-how is plentiful (Rochester Institute of Technology, University of Rochester, SUNY ESF).

The RG&E executives were unable to tell us whether the NYISO took the Public Service Commission's new Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard program into account when forecasting the energy supply shortfall. We feel that this statewide effort will have a significant impact, and should be taken into consideration when planning for future electricity needs.

Sierra Club Outings - Fall, 2007

Irondequoit Waterway

Saturday, September 22

A little-known gem lies close to home for the Rochester area. This lush woodland connects Ellison Park with the Irondequoit Bay, passing by the remains of old rifle and machine-gun ranges, a lost pagoda, a favorite Indian canoe route, and rich water resources that protect extensive birdlife. Our leader is Howard Camp. Meet at 9:30AM at First Unitarian Church parking lot, 220 South Winton Road, Rochester.



Brighton Grasslands Walk

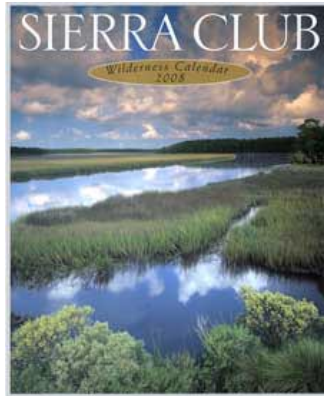
Sunday, October 28

Come walk part of the Erie Canal in Brighton and experience the new Brighton "nature path" at Meridian Park, kicking leaves as you go. Learn about the proposed 336 housing unit Costello & Son plans for this immediate area. Meet at 2:00PM, Sunday, Oct. 28 at the westside parking lot just south of the 390 & 590 overpass on South Clinton Avenue. RSVP 244-2625. Difficulty level: easy.

Rochester's Threatened Reservoirs

Saturday, October 20

If applied, a new EPA water filtration rule called LT2 will require Rochester to close both Cobbs Hill & Highland Park reservoirs at a cost of at least \$40 million. Walk through the fall fringed ancient trees of Washington Grove up and around Cobbs Hill reservoir. Then drive on to Highland Park to complete the lecture tour of these threatened water resources. Hugh Mitchell is our leader. Meet at 9:30 am at First Unitarian Church parking lot, 220 South Winton Road, Rochester. RSVP 244-2625. Difficulty level: easy.



Sierra Club 2008 Wilderness Wall Calendar-Spiral bound, month-by-month format, featuring 12 majestic North American landscapes.



Sierra Club 2008 Engagement Calendar-Week-by-week format, featuring 57 spectacular photographs and 'wire-o' binding.

ORDER FORM

SIERRA CLUB 2008 CALENDARS

Make Check or money order payable to: Sierra Club - Rochester Mail check and order form to: Sierra Club, c/o David Ruekberg 3558 Oatka Creek Rd. Leroy, NY 14482 Questions? Call David at 585-538-6463 (ext. 3) or E-mail: SierraRochTix@hotmail.com Note: Please support the work of your local club by ordering directly from us.	CALENDAR	Price	Quantity	Amount
	2008 Wilderness Calendar	\$13.99*		
	2008 Engagement Calendar	\$15.07*		
* Price includes 8% sales tax			Subtotal:	
			Shipping: \$3.00 per calendar*	
			Total:	
Sold to: _____ _____ _____		Ship to: _____ _____ _____		*Orders of ten or more: free delivery or shipping within a 15-mile radius of downtown Rochester
Phone: _____		Phone: _____		

For access to photos of calendars, and a printable order form go to: http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/buy_our_calendar.htm



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 OF THE SIERRA CLUB
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CALENDAR

Sept. 4	Tuesday	5:30 PM	-----ExCom meeting ¹ -----	Brighton Library ²
Sept. 10	Monday	7:00 PM	Book Study Group	Friends Meeting House ⁵
Sept. 15	Saturday	9:00 AM	-----Durand Beach Cleanup (see page 2)-----	meet at Durand Eastman Beach
Sept. 18	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Global Warming and Energy Committee	Saint Thomas Episcopal Church ³
Sept. 20	Thursday	7:00 PM	-----General Meeting, Oil Crunch film (see page 1)-----	Brighton Library²
Sept. 22	Saturday	9:30 AM	Outing: Irondequoit Waterways (see page 5)	First Unitarian Church parking lot⁴
Sept. 25	Tuesday	7:00 PM	-----Great Lakes Committee meeting-----	Brighton Library ²
Sept 29	Saturday	5:00 PM	Fall Festival (see page 1)	Tay House, Cobbs Hill Park
Oct. 2	Tuesday	5:30 PM	-----ExCom meeting ¹ -----	Brighton Library ²
Oct. 8	Monday	7:00 PM	Book Study Group	Friends Meeting House ⁵
Oct. 14	Sunday		-----eco-logue deadline-----	
Oct. 16	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Global Warming and Energy Committee	Saint Thomas Episcopal Church ³
Oct. 18	Thursday	7:00 PM	-----General Meeting, Thirst film (see page 1)-----	Brighton Library²
Oct. 20	Saturday	9:30 AM	Outing: Threatened Reservoirs (see page 5)	First Unitarian Church parking lot⁴
Oct. 23	Tuesday	7:00 PM	-----Great Lakes Committee-----	Brighton Library ²
Oct. 27	Saturday	time TBD	Eco-logue mailing ⁶	
Oct. 28	Sunday	2:00 PM	-----Outing: Brighten Grasslands (see page 5)-----	-----see page 5 article

¹Open to members. Call 234-1056

³2000 Highland Ave. (at corner of S. Winton Rd.)

⁵84 Scio Street

²2300 Elmwood Ave.

⁴220 Winton Rd. South

⁶Call Ray Nelson 342-2734 for place and time

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 FrankRegan@RochesterEnvironment.com and put

“subscribe SC Mailing List” in the subject line.

Call 585-234-1056 for Sierra Club voice mail.