



eco-logue

Need Calendars?
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the planet

ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP

Volume 37, No. 5
Nov/Dec/Jan 2007-8

9th Annual Winter Solstice Celebration

5:30 - 8:30pm Thursday, December 6th
Harris Whalen Park*

You're invited to this year's celebration of the Winter Solstice. Bring a vegetarian dish to share and your own place settings and utensils. (This is our effort to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.) We will provide wine, beer, cheese and crackers from 5:30 to 6:15pm, followed by our shared dinner from 6:15 to 7:00pm. There will be a brief annual report to our members by our Chairperson Deb Muratore. Then we will be taken on an imaginary trip out into space for a look at earth on the solstice by Peter Debes. Using lights and models, Peter will help us get a clear grasp of how the earth moves in space,

what causes the winter and summer solstice, and the equinoxes too. We'll marvel at how a day on the north pole lasts six months, and a night...whew, six months too. All this and even why ice is nice, and some thoughts on global warming. It is our way to help you "Explore, enjoy and protect the planet," (the Sierra Club Motto by the way). So please join us for an enjoyable evening with some old and new friends.

*Harris Whalen Park is located off Rt. 441, just west of the intersection of Rt. 250 & 441. It's directly opposite Wegmans.

Hugh Mitchell Wins the Hugh E. Cumming Environmental Quality Award by Janet MacLeod

Each year the Cumming Award is presented by The Center for Environmental Information (CEI) to "an individual, group, or organization that has made a significant contribution to environmental protection, improvement or education, in the Rochester-Genesee-Finger Lakes region." The activities must be substantive and beyond any obligations that are job or legal requirements. The award was named in memory of Hugh E. Cumming, a civic leader and Chief Executive Officer and President of Curtice-Burns Foods. He was a long-time member of the CEI Board and also served at various times as its treasurer and vice-president. After his death in 1987, the CEI Board of Directors

named the Award in his memory.

This year the Executive Committee of the Rochester Group of the Sierra Club nominated Hugh Mitchell for this award - and he won! The nomination requires documentation of the individual's environmental preservation or improvement efforts, technical contributions, or educational efforts along with supporting materials documenting the extent and duration of the activities. Since an accounting of all Hugh Mitchell's contributions would require more pages than the Ecologue can dedicate, the following excerpt from his nomination form is provided:

Hugh Mitchell has dedicated most of his adult life (in addition to his paying job) actively researching, promoting, defending, writing, and generally educating the public to support the preservation of natural resources vital to our region. Currently in retirement, he has continued his work tirelessly by

Crude Impact

Thursday, November 8, 2007
7:00 - 8:45 at the Brighton Library

Crude Impact, directed by James Janak Wood, is an award-winning documentary film. Chris Vernon of TheOilDrum.com called it "a terrific film... the best documentary I have seen on the subject." This feature film explores the interconnection between human domination of the planet, and the discovery and use of oil. Topics include the role of oil in population expansion and food production, the sociological and environmental impacts including global warming, and the destruction of areas such as the Niger Delta. Crude Impact won the prestigious Social Justice Award at the 22nd Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival. Lou Grinzo, presenter from the September lecture will be on hand to participate in the discussion following the film.

writing numerous editorials in the local papers, meeting with public officials, speaking with the media, attending public forums, inviting experts in the field to speak at various gatherings and ultimately making the voice of Upstate New York heard in Albany.

Hugh has not only been a voice in many efforts to preserve our natural resources and watershed, but a moving force in seeing that his efforts bring about action. In fact, his actions and accomplishments are long-standing, ergo our wish to recognize him for his historic and continued work to maintain the integrity of our beautiful and wild resources so that all can enjoy them.

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From the Chair



by Deb Muratore

The Tree Planting Partnership has been formed. Carol Kodweis of the Bureau

of Parks and Recreation Forestry for the City of Rochester and Germaine Knapp of the Sojourner House have agreed to partner with the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club to plant trees this coming spring.

There are 173 parks within the City of Rochester which includes street mall plantings and pocket parks. Each year the City plants approximately 500 trees between April and June. These trees are planted in City parks and between the sidewalk and the curb, (public right-of-way), on City streets.

There are approximately 700,000

trees which are growing within the sidewalk and curb in Rochester's "City in a Forest." Please see cityofrochester.gov for additional information.

The City will donate three trees and assist in preparing the holes. We will plant the three trees at the Sojourner House in the spring. This is the first step in an effort to help reduce our carbon footprint. We are planning on making this an annual event. We're going to start out small to insure the success and then expand it in the following year.

I would also like to co-ordinate a memorial plaque or brick for each tree. Please see the next eco-logue (February/March) for more details.

Please contact me with any suggestions or to offer assistance at deb.muratore@hotmail.com.

The Corbett's Glen area is again in a developers target site. For the latest information and how you can help, please visit <http://www.corbettsglen.org/>

In 1994 the Sierra Club joined the Allens Creek/Corbett's Glen Preservation Group to stop a development. Unfortunately after a long battle, we lost and the parcel of land was developed in Penfield. On the positive side, Brighton bought the other two parcels of land and created the Corbett's Glen Nature Park. The original development has been sold and the new owner wants to add three more buildings in Penfield and a parking garage in Brighton.

Read up on what's happening and send your concerns to the Penfield Planning Board at: planning@penfield.org and/or call your elected Penfield or Brighton town officials. Your input really does count.

RG&E Russell Station Update

By Bob Siegel

On September 24, 2007 Senator Charles Schumer came to town to talk about Russell Station, demanding that the plant be rebuilt using clean natural gas and not coal. On the very same day, RG&E officials sent a letter, which they claim had already been prepared, to the NY Independent System Operator (NYISO) saying that they were withdrawing the application to build a "clean coal" plant at the current Russell site. Coal-fired Russell Station, which is considered one of the dirtiest power plants in the country, is scheduled to be shutdown in December pending the completion of a transmission line that will allow the power currently provided by Russell to be obtained directly from the grid. NYISO had notified RG&E earlier this year that demand projections derived from their forecasting models showed that Rochester would experience a peak demand shortfall of approximately 250 MW (Mega-watt) by the year 2013. According to utility regulations, RG&E was legally obligated

to respond with a proposal to meet that projected demand. The proposal that they submitted included options for both a gas-fired plant as well as a coal-fired plant. As a result of the recent action, only the natural gas proposal is currently standing. A delegation from the Sierra Club met with RG&E officials earlier this year and notified them that the Club would vigorously oppose any efforts to re-power Russell Station with coal.

At the same time, the Spanish utility company, Iberdrola, has tendered a \$4.5B bid to purchase RG&E's parent company Energy East. Senator Schumer had requested a commitment from the company that they would rebuild the plant using clean natural gas, but the company refused to be specific at this time. In his remarks in Rochester, Schumer suggested that he might withdraw his support for the buyout if Iberdrola does not make its plans specifically known. Iberdrola, which operates primarily in Europe, is one of

the largest operators of wind power in the world.

While our Rochester Regional Group applauds the shift from coal to natural gas, we are not convinced at this point that the projected demand could not be met with a combination of renewables, efficiency and conservation. We hope to continue working with RG&E officials and others to achieve this objective and we were pleased that Senator Schumer's staff invited us to attend his news conference. Regrettably we were unable to fully support him at this time because our positions on conservation and renewables could not be discussed.

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 and available at \$10 per year to others.

Recent Club Activities

by Hugh Mitchell

New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo invited Sierra Club and other environmental activists to meet with his top representatives to tell them about our key concerns. We discussed some of the questionable historical operations of the Monroe County Water Authority as well as the fact that they continue to press for building the unnecessary Eastside Water Treatment Plant at an escalating cost of over \$150 million. We also talked about the need to preserve the semi-wild lands around Hemlock/Canadice Lakes.

Staff from Senator Charles Schumer's office invited the Sierra Club to attend a news conference with the Senator about the closure of RG&E's coal fired Russell Station and his plan to possibly block the Iberdrola (Spanish) company's buy-out of RG&E's parent company Energy East unless they agree to rebuild the Russell Station using natural gas. We had to respectfully decline the Senator's invitation because we are trying to work with RG&E to engage in an energy conservation program and to consider alternative energy sources before building a natural gas facility.

We will soon be invited to a meeting with Pete Grannis, Commissioner of the NYS Department of Conservation which will be on the same order as the Andrew Cuomo meeting.

Development Along the Canal

by Nancy Chalker-Tennant

A large new project by Costello Company is proposed for Brighton canal lands between Meridian Park (to the east) and South Clinton Ave. (to the west - near the radio towers). Some key project features are:

- A development of 63 acres in Brighton.
- Many residential units.
- Apartment buildings of several stories each immediately overlooking the canal.
- The project has received advanced

Northeast Conservation Committee Fall Conference

The Road to 80% CO2 Reduction -- Solutions for the Northeast

by Linda Isaacson Fedele and Hugh Mitchell

Wow. I'm grateful to the Sierra Club's NE Regional Committee for hosting a wonderful conference at the YMCA's Camp Jewell in the mountains of northwestern Connecticut—during a picture perfect Autumn weekend, no less! The focus was on energy in the Northeast, with a special emphasis on wind power.

Many experts with research, industry, policy, and activist backgrounds shared information and their experiences. I came away with two main points: One is that energy conservation, i.e. using less energy by cutting back on our energy intensive activities, is just as important as a transition to renewable energy. The two need to go hand-in-hand, with energy conservation being a required first step. Second, rather than being a "pie in the sky," wind power is a proven renewable energy technology that is being used very successfully right now. For example, did you know that:

- The energy being produced by wind has grown an average of 30% each year since 2004, both nationally and internationally.
- Up to 20% of U.S. power could be supplied by wind with NO upgrades required to the existing transmission system.
- Denmark, fully energy independent since the mid-1990s, generates about a third of its

power via wind turbines—mostly offshore.

- One of the largest wind farms in the northeast is within an easy drive from Rochester. The Maple Ridge Wind Farm in Lowville, NY is the largest alternative energy project east of the Mississippi, with 195 turbines that can generate up to 321 megawatts of power.
- Though an oft-cited argument against wind power is that it's dangerous to birds, on average each turbine kills only one or two birds each year—many fewer than those killed by the pollutants spewed by coal burning power plants to produce the same amount of energy. The Audubon Society has issued a formal statement in support of wind power.

Overall, for this newly active member of the Sierra Club, the Conference was an excellent way to learn about energy and wind power issues, as well as to meet Sierra Club activists and staff. The next Northeast Regional Conference is being planned for the Spring, and will include training on how to lobby our legislators for policy supporting energy conservation and efficiency, and the transition to renewables.

development funding from NYS.

- Land preparation (bulldozing) to begin as soon as Brighton authorizes the project.

There are many questions still to be resolved. The Sierra Club encourages citizens to voice their questions and opinions on how this project develops by writing to Sandra Frankel, Town Supervisor and/or the Brighton Town Board, 2300 Elmwood Avenue, Rochester NY 14618.

Award (continued from page 1)

Hugh Mitchell, the honoree, was recognized at the Community Salute to the Environment, sponsored by the Center for Environmental Information at the Hyatt Regency on October 25, with featured guest speaker Mr. Peter Smith, President of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

Congratulations Hugh!

Federal Energy Bill

by Bob Siegel

In a historic shift this summer, Congress starting putting pieces into place to achieve three important goals: keep the economy growing, create jobs and meet the challenge of global warming. With oil reaching prices over \$80 a barrel, consumers are forced to dig deeper and deeper into their pocketbooks to meet rising energy costs. Meanwhile the American public is clearly anxious to take action on global warming. Fortunately, Congress has the opportunity to take on these challenges by passing an energy bill this fall.

With everything in place, Congress just needs to flip the switch and bring America's new energy future to life. By raising fuel efficiency standards to 35 miles per gallon and by using solar, wind and other renewable fuels to provide at least 15% of our electricity, Congress can create jobs, spark new economic growth, save consumers money, cut pollution, succeed in making America more energy independent, and make real progress in reducing carbon emissions that are warming the Earth.

The Senate's version of the bill was passed earlier this year. It contains a provision to increase fuel economy standards for our cars, trucks, and SUVs to 35 miles per gallon by 2020, the first increase in more than 30 years. By requiring the efficiency Americans want, these standards will help the American automakers rebound against their foreign competitors. This provision has the potential to create 22,000 jobs in the auto industry alone -178,000 new jobs total, according to a recent analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists. UCS also found that the Senate's fuel economy provision would save consumers \$25 billion at the pump by 2020. And by using less oil every day, America becomes more energy independent.

Yet the auto industry continues to fight meaningful increases in fuel

economy and is trying to weaken the carefully crafted Senate compromise—a compromise that was supported by everyone from Trent Lott to Ted Kennedy. The auto industry backs a weaker proposal that does too little, too late and would leave us dangerously dependent on oil - forcing us to import 700,000 barrels more each day than we would under the Senate's plan. After 30 years of resisting, it's time for the automakers to get off their tailpipes and help solve some of America's most pressing problems.

While the Senate bill included increases in fuel economy, the House version requires that 15 percent of our electricity come from renewable sources like wind, solar and biomass by the year 2020. Establishing a national Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) will help fight global warming and spark economic growth and jobs creation. It will create tens of thousands of new jobs. States like Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and New York that have passed an RES are already seeing hundreds - even thousands - of new jobs created as a result. By relying more on renewables and less on fossil fuels, an RES will also help consumers and businesses save billions on their energy bills. The House provision allows a utility to use energy efficiency measures to meet 4 of the 15 percent required. This plan is a common sense compromise that will spur the development of renewable energy in a way that every state can achieve. Scientists around the world have agreed on the amount of CO2 we need to eliminate in order to curb the worst effects of global warming. Combining the best elements of both these bills would get us nearly a fifth of the way to that goal, according to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy. If Congress flips the switch and lights the way, this energy bill will take us a long way towards a brighter, cleaner, safer future.

WANT TO HELP GET THE WORD OUT?

by Pat Loffredo

The Sierra Club is starting a Marketing Committee and wants your help. You do not need marketing experience. Just your help on a project or two throughout the year would be great. This committee's goal is to reach the general public by communicating the Sierra Club's message of environmental advocacy.

If you are interested in finding out more, you are welcome to attend our first Marketing meeting on Thursday, November 15 at 7pm in the study room at the Brighton Library, 2300 Elmwood Ave. If you can't attend this meeting or would just like more information please call 234-1056 and leave a message.

BALLOT

Sierra Club, Rochester Regional Group
November 2007

Based on nominations, the proposed slate of officers for 2008 & 2009 is listed below. Officers elected last year and serving through the end of 2008 are: Cecelia Crone, Hugh Mitchell, Deb Muratore, Frank Regan, Sara Rubin, and David Ruekberg. (Subsequently the Ex-Com elected Peter Debes to complete David Ruekberg's term.) Use blanks for write-in candidates.

Member of Executive Committee

2-year term (2007-2008)

Vote for six

- Margie Campaigne
- Nancy Chaulker-Tennant
- Linda Isaacson Fedele
- Suku Menon
- Ray Nelson
- Bob Siegel
- _____
- _____

PLEASE VOTE!

Cut out ballot, and mail by December 6
to: Elections
Sierra Club
P.O. Box 39516
Rochester, NY 14604-9516

Book Study Group

by Nancy Chalker-Tennant

The next meeting of the Book Study Group will be on Monday, November 12 at 7:00PM at the Friends Meeting House, 84 Scio St. Free parking is available at the East End Garage. We will continue reading *The World Without Us* by Alan Weisman.

This book is raising many questions among us, which leads to an interesting discussion. We decided to “map” parts of the book to better understand the text. We have each chosen chapters to illuminate with whatever visuals or extra text we choose to share. No pressure, we will just come up with our own visions.

Join us to make your own map or just come to discuss the book. Call 244-2634 if you have any questions.

Letter to the Editor

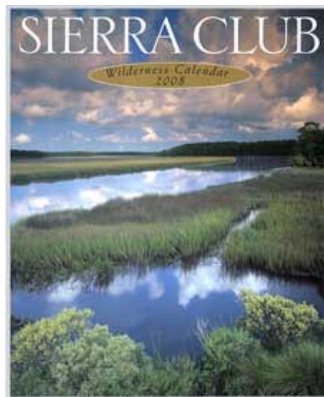
I am writing to ask about the trash generated at the September 29 Rochester Sierra Club Fall Festival. Perhaps I didn't look hard enough, but I didn't see places to separate compostables (food waste and paper) and re-usable plastic to be washed. Further, I realized after the event that I wished we had not used these materials at all. Can't we, as the Sierra Club, help raise consciousness about both the use of resources (paper, plus petroleum-based plastics), and disposal issues?

Here's a suggestion for the next Sierra Club function in which food is served: In the advance notice of the event, why not ask people to bring their own place setting? It's not too hard to tote along, in a re-usable bag, a plate,

fork, cup and cloth napkin. Local groups like the GVOSA have been doing this for years; shouldn't the Sierra Club have been a *leader* in this kind of responsibility? How can we expect our governments to act to conserve our natural environment, unless we all, as individuals and in our small groups, change our personal behavior regarding resources? “

Janet Laird

Thanks, Janet. We deserve to be chastised. And thanks for reminding us of the importance of being good stewards of our resources. Actually, in past years we have done much of what you suggest, but unfortunately we got careless. We are committed to doing better in the future, as a result of your letter. - Ed.



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: _____ _____ _____ Phone: _____		Ship to: _____ _____ _____ Phone: _____		*Orders of ten or more: free delivery or shipping within a 15-mile radius of downtown Rochester

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



ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP
OF THE SIERRA CLUB
P.O. Box 39516
ROCHESTER, NY 14604-9516

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CALENDAR

Nov. 6	Tuesday	6:30 PM	ExCom meeting ¹	Penfield Library ⁸
Nov. 8	Thursday	7:00 PM	Crude Impact, General Meeting (see page 1)	Brighton Library²
Nov. 12	Monday	7:00 PM	Book Study Group	Friends Meeting House ⁵
Nov. 15	Thursday	7:00 PM	Marketing Committee (see page 4)	Brighton Library²
Nov. 20	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Global Warming and Energy Committee	Saint Thomas Episcopal Church ³
Nov. 20	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Wetlands Committee	150 Sunset Drive, Brighton ⁷
Nov. 27	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Great Lakes Committee	Brighton Library ²
Dec. 4	Tuesday	6:30 PM	ExCom meeting ¹	Penfield Library ⁸
Dec. 6	Thursday	5:30 PM	Winter Solstice Party (see page 1)	Harris Whalen Park⁴
Dec. 10	Monday	7:00 PM	Book Study Group	Friends Meeting House ⁵
Dec. 18	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Global Warming and Energy Committee	Saint Thomas Episcopal Church ³
Dec. 18	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Wetlands Committee	150 Sunset Drive, Brighton ⁷
Jan. 13	Sunday		eco-logue deadline	
Jan. 14	Monday	7:00 PM	Book Study Group	Friends Meeting House ⁵
Jan. 15	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Global Warming and Energy Committee	Saint Thomas Episcopal Church ³
Jan. 15	Tuesday	7:30 PM	Wetlands Committee	150 Sunset Drive, Brighton ⁷
Jan. 22	Tuesday	7:00 PM	Great Lakes Committee	Brighton Library ²
Jan. 26	Saturday	time TBD	Eco-logue mailing ⁶	

¹Open to members. Call 234-1056

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

⁸84 Scio Street

⁷Call Sara at 442-6890 for information

²2300 Elmwood Ave.

⁴North side of Rte 441, across from Wegmans

⁶Call Ray Nelson 342-2734 for place and time

⁸1985 Baird Rd., Penfield

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.