

Sierra Club's 11th Annual Environmental Forum

“Local and Sustainable Food - Local Food Choices”

Discover how every aspect of environmental well-being is touched by how we eat and learn about local options for action that are available to everyone.

**Thursday
April 16, 2009
5:30 pm to 9 pm**

**Free & Open
to the public**

**Location:
First Unitarian Church
of Rochester
220 Winton Road South
Rochester, NY 14610**

Co-Sponsored by
The First Unitarian Church
Environmental Task Force

**Rochester's Premier
Earth Day Event**

Community Fair starts at 5:30 pm

- Over 30 Booths including Local Food Producers & Providers and Local Environmental & Non-profit organizations.
- Green Product Raffle at 6:30 pm
- Heirloom Seed Give-Away from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm
- Homemade Skin Salve Demonstrations by Rochester Roots
- Free Samples from Small World Bakery
- Free Gardening advice from Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Many ideas for 2009 Summer & Fall Activities
- Talk with local CSA's, Farmers Markets, Farms and more.
- Jazz Music by Art St. Hilaire Trio from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm
- Light fare (soup and wraps) available for purchase from Abundance Co-op Market.

Speakers begin at 7pm and include:



Michael Warren Thomas
Independent Radio Host
and Speaker
Website:
www.savorlife.com



Elizabeth Henderson
Farmer, Author & CSA
Pioneer
Website:
www.gvooca.org



Peter McDonald
Clean Food Farmer and
Speaker
Website:
www.pasturepride.com

From the Chair



by Deb Muratore

This is an era of economic depression, spiraling costs of everything, job losses and the national budget/debt skyrocketing into numbers no one can comprehend. Most of life seems to be lived in a dichotomy - now there is less consumerism and less stuff going into the landfills and at the same time there are millions of people out of work and losing their homes. How do we turn the economy around and make it more sustainable and at the same time stop the consumerism train and throw away society? I don't have any answers - just a lot of questions.

Most of us were brought up to color

inside the lines - now seems like a good time to start to color outside the lines. Take this time to re-evaluate our lives and our buying habits. Can we learn to consume less but reduce, reuse and recycle more? Give back to the planet instead of just taking.

The George Eastman House has another Human Spirit Film "An Examined Life" on Sat. 4/11 at 7pm and repeated on Sun. 4/12 at 5pm. "Filmmaker Astra Taylor accompanies nine of today's most influential thinkers and philosophers on a series of unique excursions through places and spaces that hold particular resonance for them and their ideas." Going to extreme opposites in places such as from Fifth Ave. to a garbage dump - the film "reveals philosophy's power to transform the way we see the world around us and imagine our place in it."

Unwanted Pharmaceutical Collection Update and Next Collection Date

May 7th at the Monroe County Rochester Operations Center at 444 East Henrietta Road. 480 residents dropped off approximately 1000 pounds of outdated, unwanted and unusable medications per Amy Davis of the U of R.

Mark your calendars - the next collection date is April 18 from 8am to 1pm.

This keeps over-the-counter and prescription medications out of the water supply and landfills. Thanks to all the sponsors and residents who participated.

Come Back to Biking Rochester

By Frank J. Regan

For a hundred years Rochesterians have gotten around our community by bike. To learn more about our unique relationship to biking, check out this publication of the Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County and the Rochester Historical Society: Rochester History "Bloomers & Bicycles: Health and Fitness in Victorian Rochester." Now, with Global Warming and the Great Recession, the new bike phase of Rochester is blooming. Lower your carbon footprints, save money, stay healthy.

With the help of the

Rochester Bicycling Club and the Rochester Sierra Club (and a litany of governmental agencies) we are moving towards becoming a Bicycle Friendly Community. --http:

//www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/communities/

To better navigate modern Rochester

by bike, why not take a refresher course—especially like me, if you haven't had one since you were a kid. Here are the details: Biking Rochester Traffic Class – "A biking

class on how to prepare to commute by bicycle and using your bicycle for utilitarian purposes." When: Thursday, May

21st, 7PM - 9PM. Where: Genesee Waterways Center, 149 Elmwood Avenue, Rochester, NY 14611 (585) 328-3960. Here's what we will cover in the course:

- Introduction "Why you should be Cycling"
- Planning your Route
- Selecting a bicycle and equipment (you & your bike)
- Riding safely
- Riding techniques (day/night, rain, snow, cold, heat)
- Workplace accommodations
- Backup systems (if you need help)

The Bike Course is open only to Sierra the Club and Rochester Bicycling Club members. The cost is \$30 with application. The money is to be refunded. If you don't show, the application fee will be a donation to the sponsors. Family rate: two adults, same household, separate application, one \$30.00 check. Confirmation will be e-mailed. The application is online: <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/Transportation/Bike%20Course%20Applicaton.pdf>



"Seven women in Victorian dress are posing with their bicycles on a lawn. Houses are in the background. In the 1890s more than 40,000 bicycles were in use in Monroe County, and many bicycle clubs existed." – www.libraryweb.org

Pinnacle Hill: Then, and Now and What Can Be Done For the Future

by Frank Regan

You may already be familiar with Pinnacle Hill—just look up. Have you seen the TV and radio towers? While many of us know Pinnacle for its communication towers and as the home of the Hillside Children's Center, it is also the site of a large parcel of undeveloped land with an interesting, and sometimes contentious, history.

Pinnacle Hill is the largest of a chain of glacial hills that border Rochester and Brighton. The hill is a rare kame moraine which was developed over 10,000 years ago during the last glacial recession. The first documented use of Pinnacle Hill was St. Patrick's Cemetery in 1838, and it's had dozens of uses since. Commercial and residential development has threatened this Rochester landmark over the last fifty years. In the mid-1980s there was an attempt to build luxury office buildings on the summit and in the 1990s there was a proposal to construct luxury homes, but thanks to neighborhood associations, the Sierra Club, and others, the North side of the hill remains forested.

For the last couple of decades, the Town of Brighton, Monroe County,

and New York State have shown interest in preserving this natural area. But so far no plan for park development has been executed. Although private individuals have tried at various times in the last decade to purchase some vacant parcels from the current owner, Hillside Children's Center, no attempts have been successful. Also, no recorded effort from the towns of Brighton or Rochester to purchase the undeveloped areas on the Hill has been found.

Today Pinnacle Hill is an informal place to go for a hike, run, off-road bike ride or to take a dog for a walk. There is a main footpath starting at Field Street. The path leads to the summit of the hill with two overlook areas, giving views far over Brighton and to the Bristol Hills south of town. There are also numerous less well-defined footpaths winding through the woods.

But not all users of this as-yet-unprotected land are so benign. The amount of trash at the summit and near the trails has built up dramatically over the last year. Multiple unprotected campfires were built in the summer of 2008, and some of the hill's lovely maples and oaks were cut for fuel.

Clothes, beer bottles and cans, chairs, tables, fireworks, fast food wrappers and plastic bottles were just some of the trash items littering the summit. Some have spent hours cleaning this unattractive mess during the summer of 2008, but looking out for this picturesque spot at the center of our metro area is more than a single person can do alone.

There have not been recent issues with the public accessing the trails on privately-owned Pinnacle Hill. However, there are no documented easements or permissions to allow permanent public access to these trails. There also isn't any formal way of controlling how the trails are used or a means of proper litter control and cleanup. The proposed solution is to work together as a club to gain formal access to these trails and eventually entice the municipalities of Rochester and Brighton to acquire the properties in order to develop and maintain parkland.

If you are interested in helping, have some ideas, or would like more information, please contact Greg Buzulencia at gab5540@gmail.com.

Book Discussion Group

by Janet Laird

The book discussion group continues, meeting on the second Monday of the month, from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., at the Unitarian Church on Winton Road. The next two books have been chosen: (Note that the book selection for April has been changed.)

April 13

The Green Collar Economy: How one solution can fix our two biggest problems.

By Van Jones.

To quote one review:

"Jones provides ideas for rebuilding infrastructure and creating alternative energy sources, which would have the

double bonus of boosting the economy through increased employment and higher wages while decreasing our dependence on fossil fuels." And, from another, "As the ecological crisis nears the boiling point, human rights activist and environmental leader Jones lays out a visionary, meticulous and practical explanation of the two major challenges the U.S. currently faces - massive socioeconomic inequality and imminent ecological catastrophe - and how the current third wave of environmentalism, the "investment" wave, can solve both."

(There are 7 copies in the Monroe County Library System.)

May 11

Where the Wild Things Were,
by William Stolzenberg

Review: "In this impassioned debut, wildlife journalist Stolzenberg examines predation's crucial role in the preservation of ecological diversity, painting nightmarish pictures of what happens when top carnivores are exterminated from ecosystems. . . . He demonstrates how the delicate balance between predator and prey is so essential, and his book, rich in dramatic accounts of life and death in the wild, is powerful and compelling."

Great Lakes Day in Washington, D.C., February 24-25, 2009

by Suku Menon and Wayne Howard

Great Lakes colleagues, please visit www.healthylakes.org to take action to protect the Great Lakes. Pumping over 23 billion gallons of raw sewage into our Lakes each year due to failing waste water infrastructure, allowing aquatic invasive species to enter the waters through ballast from ocean going ships, and other acts of sheer neglect have pushed the Great Lakes ecology to a tipping point. More than 186 non-native invasive species have entered the Great Lakes, and a new one is discovered about every 28 weeks. Tourism and the economy of the eight states surrounding the Great Lakes rise and fall with the health of the Great Lakes ecology. The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy, published in December 2005, has defined Great Lakes issues, problems, solutions and funding requirements.

The Sierra Club is a member of Healing Our Waters (HOW), a coalition of over 100 organizations actively pursuing efforts to save the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes Commission, in conjunction with HOW, held their annual "Great Lakes Day" in Washington, D.C., February 24-25, 2009. Three members of the RRG Sierra Club Great Lakes Committee were part of an eleven-member team from New York State who participated in lobbying our Senators and Congressmen to pass legislation and appropriate funding for restoring and protecting the Great Lakes.

Top regional priorities for the Great Lakes are to:

- 1) Create jobs and protect water quality through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- 2) Clean up toxic sediments through the Legacy Act
- 3) Close the door on aquatic invasive species
- 4) Restore the language of the Clean Water Act to protect isolated wetlands through the Clean Water

Restoration Act.

- 5) Restore valuable fish and wildlife resources
- 6) Provide sustainable funding for Great Lakes restoration

Legislation and Funding Status

- There is an urgent need to fully implement the Great Lakes Regional Collaborative Strategy to restore and protect the Great Lakes. Congressional appropriations have not kept pace to provide the needed sustainable funding.

- President Obama's campaign pledged \$5 billion for Great Lakes restoration. On February 26th, it was announced that \$475 million for a Great Lakes restoration initiative would be included in the Federal FY2010 budget – the first installment on a multi-year plan. It's the largest commitment to Great Lakes Restoration ever made by a President. Please write your representatives to help get this passed through Congress.

- Federal legislation is being introduced to protect the Great Lakes. Proceeds from the proposed Cap and Trade for emissions control could be a source of funding for Great Lakes programs.

- A Brookings Institution study estimates that if the Great Lakes Regional Collaborative Strategy is fully implemented (at \$26 billion) it would yield \$50 billion of long-term benefit and at least \$30 billion in state short-term benefit.

Action needed:

The new Administration, Senate and Congress are well poised to help protect the Great Lakes. You can do your part by visiting www.healthylakes.org website and urging your representatives in the Congress and Senate to pass legislation and appropriate funding to protect the Great Lakes for the current, and more importantly, future generations.

A FUN AND EASY WAY TO HELP

Want to begin to get involved with our local Sierra Club group, but don't want to make a big commitment? We need volunteers to team up with already active members to meet and greet the public and pass out literature. Each shift will be about 2-3 hours—whatever you can do. No experience or knowledge of specific environmental issues is necessary. If you are outgoing, have a friendly smile and some energy, and enjoy talking with kids and grown-ups alike, this is for you. You'll get to enjoy the festival or fair on your own before and/or after your volunteer time.

So far, we will have tables at these events:

April 22, 6-9 PM, Victor Junior High School,

April 25, 9-1, Hamlin Beach State Park,

April 25, 9-12, Penfield Community Center

May 2, roughly 10-3, Seneca Park Zoo

June 13, roughly 10-3, Mendon Ponds Park for the Adirondack Mountain Club's Outdoor Expo

Call 585-234-1056 or e-mail lci_msw@hotmail.com if you'd like to help. We need you!

Spring Outings

by Howard Camp

Early spring is often the time of thawing, and mud. Our area offers a natural remedy in the form of esker hiking. Eskers are higher elevation trails with especially longer views afforded before spring foliage fully emerges. And the elevation of the eskers reduces the amount of mud encountered. The April outing will explore some lesser known esker gems close to Rochester. May ushers in spring blooms and running streams, well savored along the historical rapids of Philbrick Park. June will invite us to go further afield, to explore and learn about a hidden gorge and waterfalls near Naples.

Saturday, May 16, 2009
Channing H Philbrick Park
(formerly Linear Park)

Saturday April 18, 2009
Coyote's Den

Our destination is Coyote's Den trail and quarry overlook in Ellison Park. We meet at Unitarian Church Parking lot at 9:30 am. Howard & Carole Camp will lead us on a hike of about an hour in strenuous to difficult hiking.

We leave from the Unitarian Church Parking lot at 9:30am. Howard and Carol Camp show us Channing Philbrick Park, in this easy hike. It will take about one hour

Saturday, June 13, 2009
Conklin Gully

We gather at the Unitarian Church Parking lot at 9:30 am. Howard & Carole Camp show us the way to Conklin Gully, near Naples, NY. It's a moderate to strenuous hike which will take us 3 or 5 hours.

Why a Weed Walk?

by Christine Sevilla

Invasive plants are everywhere. Non-native plants have been introduced for erosion control, as fences, for medicinal uses, to recreate a homeland environment, and for their exotic beauty. Many also arrived by accident. Lacking the natural controls that checked their growth in their native landscape, these non-native plants are able to grow in a variety of conditions, spread quickly, to displace native plants, and alter ecosystems.

What happens on a Weed Walk? You'll be welcomed to the Crescent Trail. The plants we'll look for on this brief (and not taxing!) walk will be described briefly before setting off. We'll see autumn olive, black swallowwort, garlic mustard, multiflora rose, oriental bittersweet, and Tatarian honeysuckle. Horticultural and scientific experts (different experts volunteer each year) will answer questions.

What can we do after the Weed Walk? We need to take action to preserve a diverse ecosystem. We can start in our own back yards. You'll receive a brochure on invasive plants, Garden Villains, with information, photos and contacts for more advice. You will also receive a Cornell brochure, Weed Suppressive Groundcovers are plants you'll use to keep these garden villains from returning. You'll leave the Weed Walk with the experience and reference tools to battle your own garden villains.

WEED WALK
June 6, 2009 9:30 AM
Horizon Hill Conservation Area

Learn to recognize several **invasive plant species** affecting Monroe County, and visit the scenic Horizon Hill section of Perinton's Crescent Trail. **Experts will answer your questions.**

SPONSORS:

Adirondack Mountain Club
Burroughs Audubon Nature Club
Center for Sustainable Living
Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists
FL-PRISM
Genesee Land Trust
Genesee Valley Audubon Society
People for Parks
Rochester Birding Association
Rochester Regional Sierra Club

CONTACT:

invasive@luminguild.us
585 586 6085

We will meet in the Horizon Hill parking area, located "next door" to the law offices of Harris Beach at 99 Garnsey Road, near Route 96. The 825 foot peak of Horizon Hill offers a fine view of the city skyline.

Weed Walk begins at promptly 9:30 am.



ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP
 OF THE SIERRA CLUB
 P.O. Box 10518
 ROCHESTER, NY 14610-0518

Nonprofit Org.
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 Permit No. 39
 Rochester, NY

CALENDAR

April 7	Tuesday	6:30 PM	ExCom meeting ¹	Harro East, suite 600
April 13	Monday	7:00 PM	-----Book Discussion-----	-----First Unitarian Church⁴
April 16	Thursday	5:30 PM	----- 11th Annual Environmental Forum -----	-----First Unitarian Church⁴
April 21	Tuesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee-----	----- Call for directions ⁵
April 27	Monday	7:00 PM	-----Global Warming and Energy Committee-----	-----St. Thomas Episcopal Church ³
April 28	Tuesday	7:00 PM	-----Great Lakes Committee-----	----- Twelve Corners Middle School ⁷
May 5	Tuesday	6:30PM	ExCom meeting ¹	Harro East, suite 600
May 10	Sunday		eco-logue deadline	
May 11	Monday	7:00 PM	-----Book Discussion-----	-----First Unitarian Church⁴
May 19	Tuesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee-----	----- Call for Directions ⁵
May 21	Thursday	7:00 PM	----- Biking Skills -----	----- Genesee Waterways Center²
May 25	Monday	7:00 PM	-----Global Warming and Energy Committee-----	-----St. Thomas Episcopal Church ³
May 26	Tuesday	7:00 PM	-----Great Lakes Committee-----	----- Twelve Corners Middle School ⁷

¹Open to members. Call 234-1056

³2000 Highland Ave. Call 703-1189 for directions

⁵Call 442-6890 or 586-6085 for information

⁷2643 Elmwood Ave. 14618

²149 Elmwood Ave.

⁴220 S. Winton Rd.

⁶see www.healthylakes.org

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.