



# eco-logue

Explore, enjoy  
and protect  
the planet

ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP

Volume 33, No. 2  
April/May 2003

- \*Booths
- \*Displays
- \*Networking

## Fifth Annual Sierra Club Environmental Forum "From Crisis To Opportunity"

A Forum on National, State, & Local Environmental Issues

- \*Recruiting
- \*Planning
- \*Information Sharing

Thursday, April 10, 2003, First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South

This program is co-sponsored with Choices & the Environment Task Force of First Unitarian Church.

There is no question this country is facing an environmental crisis, but in every crisis there is opportunity for change and betterment. This year Sierra Club has asked three environmental experts to comment on what they see as the issues we face in 2003 on a national, state and local level AND what we can do to ameliorate these problems. We are fortunate to have the help of Elizabeth Thorndike, who will focus on national issues, David Higby of Environmental Advocates (in Albany) who will focus on State issues, and Jack Bradigan Spula, award winning reporter for City News, who will focus on local issues.

Elizabeth Thorndike, PhD is well

known to the Rochester community as founder and spark plug of the Center for Environmental Information. She is also a Cornell associate and advisor to state government. Elizabeth is a person "in the know" on national and state levels with expertise on such wide-ranging topics as acid rain and global warming. She will focus on some national environmental issues. She will undoubtedly also offer some helpful insights into state issues during the Forum exchange.

David Higby is a Program Associate with Environmental Advocates of New York with a background in public policy development. David has a lifetime of experience as a grass roots environmental activist who has specialized in Adirondack issues as well as solid waste disposal. He has extensive lobbying experience with New York State government.

Jack Bradigan Spula needs no introduction to the Rochester community having served as reporter, political activist and voice of conscience for over 25 years. From his eagle's nest view at City Newspaper Jack is admirably positioned to know the local environmental issues facing us. We look forward to hearing his thoughts on these issues and what we can do about them.

Each speaker will address the audi-

ence for about 20 minutes followed by a forum discussion based on questions from the floor. The Sierra Club Environmental Forum, (a free event courtesy of First Unitarian Church), offers the environmental community and the public a chance to meet local environmentalists, visit group booths, network and learn. In the past, our Forums have been premier Earth Month events. We invite you to participate and work on moving From Crisis To Opportunity.

Note: If you know of a group who wants a table display, it is not too late to sign up. Call 244-2625.

\*Food & Beverages Available

\*Free Admission

Treats!

That's right, we need some! We're looking for a few people to make some yummy treats we can sell at the Environmental Forum. Homemade goods always sell well, from brownies to gluten-free tarts – if you can make it, we'll take it! Even better – bring it to the Forum when you come. Please contact David Ruekberg and let him know what you can bring: 538-6463 or druekberg@hotmail.com. Thanks!

### Schedule

- 5:30 - 6:00 PM - Groups set up displays
- 6:00 - 7:00 PM - Doors open to public for visiting booths, networking etc.
- 7:00 - 9:00 PM - Forum program followed by questions from the floor.
- 9:00 PM - Visits to booths, recruiting, networking.

## FROM THE CHAIR



By Hugh Mitchell

Sometimes you can see things clearer from a distance. We are just back from Mexico and

I am newly impressed by three things: the amazing organization of our country, the high level of anxiety over the US economy, and the Administration's risky international adventures. Of equal concern is what the Administration is doing to place a twist on nearly every piece of environmental legislation of the last 25 years. One recent example is the most serious effort to roll back the Clean Air Act since its enactment through what the Administration calls the "Clear Skies" Act. (The Sierra Club calls it the "Clear Lies" Act.) It relates to permitting old

smoky facilities to expand without updating its anti-pollution technologies. As Senator Jeffords points out, Mr. Bush's far-reaching, across the board juggling of environmental protections will make things far worse than they already are.

But where there is crisis there is also opportunity. This is the reason our fifth annual Earth Month Environmental Forum, titled "From Crisis To Opportunity" will be devoted to looking at BOTH problems AND solutions to national, state and local environmental issues. The message we hope to get across is that in crisis there is danger and uncertainty but there is also motivation for change and betterment.

When economic, political and environmental crises cry out from every direction, we can resolve to seize the moment to make positive changes. Call me if you want to know how you can get involved 244-2625.

## Reducing Pesticides in Monroe County

By Frank J. Regan – Conservation Chairperson

There is growing evidence that New York State, and particularly Monroe County overuse pesticides—a danger to our children's and pet's health, and to our environment. According to data from the DEC, "Monroe County is among the top ten counties in the state for total amount of pesticides reported in 1998." The Neighborhood Notification Law (NNL) is a measure to reduce the use of pesticides and to protect children and the environment. The State Legislature passed this law three years ago, but left it to each county to adopt it separately. The NNL requires that pesticide applicators give 48 hours notice before spraying within 150 feet of any residence. In addition, the new law provides commercial pesticide applicators a wide range of alternatives to the use of toxic pesticides. Therefore, the NNL responsibly encourages less toxic forms of pesticides and a reduced amount of continual applications of dangerous chemicals. This is in contrast to the present situation where the commercial use of pesticides is not usually in response to a documented pest problem, but is a

routine part of lawn maintenance, and often on a set schedule.

However, this law is going to be a difficult one to pass because in Monroe County, the focus tends to be on the business (chemical applicators) rather than on the public's safety. Despite strong commitment and hard work on the part of the Sierra Club, Onondaga County failed to pass the Neighborhood Notification Law for this very reason.

But, there is hope. Right now, while the Monroe County Legislature gathers information on the impact of this law on the lawn application business in the six counties that have passed it, there is a chance. Four Monroe County legislators—Lynda Garner Goldstein (District 14), Jose A Cruz (District 29), Carla Palumbo (District 28), and Jay Ricci (District 17) --have gone on record stating that residents need notification that allows them to take necessary precautions, such as making sure children and pets are indoors and that all doors and windows are closed before spraying begins. In addition, numerous respected environmental groups, the local AFL/CIO plus the

## Friends of the Genesee River

By Laura Arney

Volunteers are needed to participate in the scouting and detailing of Genesee River access points and amenities. Our Genesee River Project is in the early stages, and this is a good time to join in.

In April we will be driving up and down the river, gathering mileage from point to point, and speaking with the locals about their favorite spots to linger along the water. We'll have fun with map reading, creating a data base of facts and figures and learning about the changeable nature of the Genesee.

May and June are the most interesting months to be out canoeing on the Genesee River. The deep water in the southern tier is most reliable then. Anyone with a canoe or kayak is invited to explore new areas with us.

We will attempt to devote one day a week this spring to these activities, either on a Thursday or a weekend day. Schedules will be flexible to accommodate the needs of those involved. The outings will differ from a Club membership canoe outing in that we will be taking notes and discovering rest and lunch stops along the way.

Help make this project a success as we spotlight the Genesee River as another feature in the region's diverse recreational assets. Call Laura E. Arney (334-8548) to join the effort. We will work out a mutually agreeable schedule.

Attorney General and Governor of New York State have endorsed this law and made their intent known to the Monroe County Legislature.

For a full report of updates on this important effort, go to our web site: ([http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/neighborhood\\_notification\\_law.htm](http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/neighborhood_notification_law.htm)). Here you can read the full text of the law and you can find information on how and what to say to your Monroe County Legislator. Please do not let this opportunity to help our children and our environment slip by. The time is now to contact your Monroe County Legislator.



## Outing Schedule - Spring, 2003

Unless otherwise noted all Outings will start at the listed time from the lower parking lot at First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South, Rochester.  
 Wear clothing and boots appropriate to the weather.  
 Note change in date & time for the Montezuma Outing.

Date/Time	Destination	Leader	Special Equipment
April 26 at 9:30 am	Springtime at Montezuma Refuge for observation and study of fowl migration patterns	Howard Camp	Bring Bag Lunch plus an item to share with the Syracuse Group of Sierra Club
May 3 at 9:30 am	Hidden Waterfall hike in the Letchworth area	Charles Appel	Bring Bag Lunch
May 17 at 9:15 am	Tour of Harbec Plastics plant, Ontario, NY.	Eric Smith	none
June 7, 9:00 am	Canoeing on Genesee River Caneadea to Filmore	Laura Arney 334-8548	Canoe, paddles, life jackets, lunch
July 12, Start time TBD	Study visit to Native American sites, Ganondagan to Bare Hill	Cathy Gill	Bring Bag Lunch

### Springtime at Montezuma

Many Western New Yorkers are not aware that bird watchers from other states visit our area as a prime location for observing migrating wild birds. The Montezuma swamp is one of these desired venues, and it also offers one of the few protected examples of the lush wildlife-fostering wetlands that once covered much of our part of the State.

### Hidden Waterfalls

The region of Mudville south of Letchworth State Park provides a wealth of little known areas of natural beauty, broad vistas, forgotten history and access to one of the longer cross-country hiking trails in our region. This trip will provide a small slice of orientation to these little-known treasures including an orientation to the geology of the Mudville area.

### Harbec Plastics Tour

This is an opportunity to see what can be done to save energy and protect the environment in a manufacturing plant. Harbec Plastics Company in Ontario, NY has worked hard to put in place the most advanced methods of saving energy in their facility and manufacturing processes. We will meet at First Unitarian Church parking lot at 9:30 AM on Saturday, May 17. Bob Bechtold, president of Harbec, will be our guide. The tour will take about one hour. Call Eric Smith 576-1421, or E-mail at [esmith@hotmail.com](mailto:esmith@hotmail.com) for more information.

### Energy Tips

By Eric Smith

For some great ideas on energy efficiency, check out these web pages:

[www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov) If you're like many of us, you won't consider driving a car that gets less than 30 m.p.g. At this site you will find out that the most efficient gas powered SUV only gets 25 m.p.g.

[www.aceee.org](http://www.aceee.org) Check out consumer resources. Here you can learn all about efficient appliances. An appliance will get an Energy Star rating if it exceeds Federal efficiency standards by 10%.

[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) Here you can learn all you ever wanted about the Energy Star program. If you are buying new appliances, check here first!

[www.standardsasap.org](http://www.standardsasap.org) A complete guide to government standards dealing with appliance energy.

[www.sierraclub.org/energy](http://www.sierraclub.org/energy) Here you can find easy and effective action items. The Sierra Club has made it very easy to send a political action E-mail. You can also get tons of information regarding fuel efficient vehicles and green energy sources.

[www.mcdonough.com](http://www.mcdonough.com) This is the web page of William McDonough, one of the nations leading architects that is designing green offices and eco friendly city buildings.

### Sierra Club "South"

Another meeting of Sierra Club members in the Livingston County area has been scheduled for 7:00 PM, April 25. Topics considered are 1) herbicides to kill weeds in the lake, 2) pesticides and fertilizers on lawns, and 3) development encroaching on wetlands. The meeting will be held in a members barn at 570 Big Tree Road, Lakeville.. Call Laura Arney (334-8548) or Hugh Mitchell (244-2625) for directions.

# CALENDAR

Mar. 31	Monday	10:30 AM	----- "Civics Day" Sierra Club talks to students -----	Albion High School
<b>April 10</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Sierra Club Environmental Forum (see page 1)</b>	<b>First Unitarian Church<sup>1</sup></b>
April 16	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee -----	Call George Parker, 442-2483 for location
April 17	Thursday	6:30 PM	----- ExCom meeting <sup>2</sup> -----	St. John's Meadows
April 23	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Energy Committee -----	25 Brook Hill Lane, Apt. 2, Penfield <sup>5</sup>
April 26	Saturday	9:30 AM	----- Outing, Monetzuma Wildlife Refuge (see page 3) -----	meet at First Unitarian Church <sup>1</sup>
April 28	Monday	7:00 PM	----- Sierra Club talk "Sprawl Follows the Pipes" -----	RIT (call 244 2625 for info)
May 2-4	Fri.-Sun.		----- Atlantic Chapter Conservation Summit Meeting -----	Monticello, NY
May 3	Saturday	9:30 AM	----- Outing, Mudville, Waterfalls (see page 3) -----	meet at First Unitarian Church <sup>1</sup>
May 4	Sunday		----- Eco-logue deadline -----	
May 8	Thursday	6:30 PM	----- ExCom meeting <sup>2</sup> -----	St. John's Meadows
May 17	Saturday	9:30 AM	----- Tour of Harbec Plastics plant (see page 3) -----	meet at First Unitarian Church <sup>1</sup>
May 21	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee -----	Call George Parker, 442-2483 for location
May 28	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Energy Committee -----	25 Brook Hill Lane, Apt. E, Penfield <sup>5</sup>
June 7	Saturday	9:00 AM	----- Canoe Outing, Genesee River -----	meet at First Unitarian Church <sup>4</sup>

1 First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South

2 Open to members. Call Hugh Mitchell at 244-2625.

4 Call 334-8548 for information

5 Call 768-5102 for information and directions

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 [frankrrr@rochester.rr.com](mailto:frankrrr@rochester.rr.com)

Call 244-2625 for information about Sierra Club events and voice mail