

ALLEGHENY SIERRAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLEGHENY GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB

Volume 30, Issue 1

Fall 2011

Pennsylvania Chapter Honors Local Sierra Club Activists

Long-time Allegheny Group members Marilyn Skolnick and Bruce Sundquist were awarded “Supernova” Life Time Achievement Awards by the Sierra Club’s Pennsylvania Chapter. The awards were a highlight of the Chapter’s Star Gazer’s Dinner on the September 24 in Carlisle.

Marilyn’s greatest strength has been her ability to hold accountable the various government organizations, especially in air quality and transportation. She has served the Club for over 30 years. Because Marilyn’s most passionate commitment has always been to improving transportation, she feels that her most worthwhile work was on the board for “Magic Carpet”, forerunner of the Access program of the Port Authority of Allegheny County which allows seniors and people with disabilities access to shared ride transportation.

Bruce has served the Club for 40+ years. He has been a member, outings leader and Outings Chair for the Allegheny Group. His detailed trail guides for southwest Pennsylvania and the forests beyond are the envy of all Pennsylvania Sierra Clubbers. His website receives 9000+ hits per year. It includes over a thousand pages of scientific articles.

Congratulations to Marilyn and Bruce!

Three members from the Allegheny Group’s Endangered Species Action Team received Star awards from the Sierra Club’s Pennsylvania Chapter. Bett Beeson, Mike LaMark, and Kathleen Smith make up this “constellation” of stars who work tirelessly to contribute their time, resources, and creativity to the cause. The team is very active in their work and hold regular meetings, tabling events, and classes with the Imagine Environmental Charter School. Through their education and conservation work on endangered species in Pennsylvania, Kathleen, Mike, and Bett are an outstanding example of effective leadership and dedication.

Congratulations to each of them!



Bruce Sundquist (left) and Marilyn Skolnick (right) were recognized by the PA Chapter of the Sierra Club for over 70 (combined) years of dedicated volunteering for the Sierra Club.

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The Sierra Club’s members are 700,000 of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America’s oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

The Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club was organized in the early 1970s. It is one of 11 groups comprising the Pennsylvania Chapter.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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Letters to the editor, photos, stories from outings and any other submissions can be sent to sierran@alleghenysc.org

ALLEGHENY SIERRAN
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Opinions expressed in the *Allegheny Sierran* are those of the authors, and should not be taken as Sierra Club policy unless specifically stated. The *Allegheny Sierran* is the newsletter of the Allegheny Group and is intended to keep the membership posted on the activities of the group. Production costs are paid from group fundraising activities.

All parties are encouraged to respond to the articles we publish and submit any material they feel may be appropriate. Submissions and questions regarding newsletter content should be addressed to the editor, Marla Ferrency, at sierran@alleghenysc.org.

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Pres. Obama, EPA, and the Keystone XL Pipeline

On the Friday before Labor Day the White House announced that President Obama had withdrawn the EPA's draft regulations for ground level ozone emissions. The national environmental community was stunned by this move, afraid that it was a political gambit that played well into the right-wing mantra that industry is over-regulated.

Years in the making, the EPA's draft standards were designed to reduce the emission of particulate matter and toxins such as mercury from stationary sources such as power plants and refineries. The EPA presented the savings in health costs and the availability of sound technology (see <http://alleghenysc.org/?p=2926>).

Soon Pres. Obama will have a chance to regain the trust of the environmental community if he blocks the Keystone XL Pipeline project. This proposed pipeline will carry bitumen 1,700 miles from the tar sands in Alberta's boreal forest, across the 'Sandhills' of Nebraska, and over the Ogallala Aquifer (see <http://alleghenysc.org/?p=2777>).

Please call the White House (202-456-1414) and tell the President that A) You are disappointed in his withdrawal of the EPA's draft ozone standards, and B) ask him to REJECT the Keystone XL Pipeline project.

Six Huplits Wildlife Grants Awarded for 2011

Each year a gift from the Huplits Trust is distributed by the Allegheny Group, Sierra Club, to award worthy grant applicants promising to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat in Pennsylvania. This year Christopher Seymour, chair of the Huplits Wildlife Grants Committee, announced the awarding of six grants totaling \$95,000. The six grants will help to:

- Put a check on damaging oil and gas extraction on the Allegheny National Forest.
- Protect aquatic wildlife at risk from mining and gas drilling in Wheeling Creek watershed.
- Recover and maintain populations of the endangered eastern massasauga rattlesnake.
- Restore Glade Run in Fayette County as example of mining impact recovery.
- Assist organizations to protect land and habitat from Marcellus gas drilling.
- Protect wildlife habitat from land-fill development in Centre County.

For details of the grants, see <http://alleghenysc.org/?p=2751>

Allegheny Group's First Ever Raffle

Help Make it a Success! Which it undoubtedly will be if all of us participate. The dozen prizes are terrific, so buy as many tickets as you like for whatever appeals to you. Winners will be picked at the Allegheny Group's December Holiday Party (date to be announced). Tickets can also be purchased at the party.

The Group has 4,557 members. If each of us purchased just one \$2 raffle ticket, we'd make over \$9,000! And think of all we could accomplish if everyone bought three tickets for \$5! Just look at the prizes and see how tempting they are.

- 1. Pittsburgh Filmmakers Gift Card, a \$70 value.** This card entitles you to 12 films at any of the three Filmmakers' locations, which can be shared with a friend. Free popcorn with each film. Good for a year from the ALG Holiday Party.
- 2. Exkursion Outfitters Gift Cards, a \$50 value.** Pittsburgh's oldest and most complete specialty outdoor shop, located in Monroeville, offers the area's hikers, climbers and kayakers a fully stocked store, plus classes, clinics and lots of advise.
- 3. Two Tickets for a Pirate's 2012 Home Game, a \$54 value.** We'll send the winner a choice of alternative dates before the 2012 season begins.
- 4. Sierra Club T-shirt (large) and cap, a \$53 value.** Both are 100% organic cotton with an attractive Sierra Club logo.
- 5. Plundering Appalachia: The Tragedy of Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining, a \$50 value.** A powerful expose in words and images of the environmental and human devastation wrought by the coal industry in Appalachia.
- 6. Quiet Storm Gift Card, a \$20 value.** Eat at Pittsburgh's best vegetarian restaurant.
- 7. Big Burrito Gift Card, a \$25 value** for any of the seven Mad Mex restaurant locations in Pittsburgh.
- 8. Giant Eagle Gift Card, a \$25 value.**
- 9. Western Pa. Hiking Guides, a \$26 value.** Three hiking guides written by ALG members--Hiker's Guide to Laurel Highlands Trail, The Laurel Highlands: A Hiking Guide, and Allegheny National Forest Hiking Guide.
- 10. Sierra Club Tote Bag, a \$30 value.** 100% organic cotton heavy canvas bag.
- 11. Sierra Club Sling Bag, a \$23 value.** Heavy-duty polyester triangular sling bag.
- 12. The Bicycle Book: Wit, Wisdom and Wanderings, a \$15 value.** Edited by SC member Jim Joyce of Emsworth, this book of original stories, narratives and cartoons belongs on every cyclist's coffee table.

One ticket is \$2; three tickets are \$5; seven tickets are \$10. Buy as many tickets as you want!

2011 Fall Raffle

Raffle Item		No. of Tickets (1, 3 or 7)	\$ Amount (\$2, \$5 or \$10)	Name _____
#	Description			
				Address _____

				Phone _____
Total Amount Enclosed				E-mail _____

Make checks payable to Allegheny Group, Sierra Club. Send your check and this form to: Jackie Apone, 5228 Beeler Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15217.



Fall 2011 Allegheny Group Outings

- * For more up-to-date listings, visit <http://www.alleghenysc.org>
- * Sierra Clubbers planning to lead future outings should contact Bruce Sundquist at 724-327-8737 or bsundquist1@windstream.net.
- * All participants on Sierra Club outings must sign a standard liability waiver. If you wish to read it well before you are asked to sign the form at the trailhead, go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms> or contact the Outings Department at 415-977-5528 for a copy.
- * Allegheny Group's Compliance Number is CST 2087766-40.

Day and Weekend Trips

Sat. Oct. 22 ~ Enjoy a 4-6-mile hike (depending on weather) down to Buffalo Creek. Lunch will be along Buffalo Creek in a spruce grove with a campfire. We will explore (optional) several fascinating old limestone mines. Meet at Bob Evans Restaurant in Harmerville at 10 AM. (It's at the junction of Rt.910 and Old Rt.28.) This will be a joint trip with Meetup. The limit is 15. \$5. suggested carpool fee - 24 miles each way. Contact Ed Divers, 412-828-5154.

Sat. Oct. 22 ~ Rock Stars on Chestnut Ridge This will be an 8-mile shuttle hike along White Tail Trail taking in spectacular Pine Knob, traversing our way over to spectacular White Rocks. White Tail Trail is a state forest hiking trail running along the top of Chestnut Ridge from Pine Knob to Quebec Run Wild Area. Pine Knob is a spectacular lookout point on the top of the mountain. On a clear day the USX tower is visible from there. George Washington, Christopher Gist, the Marquis de Jumonville, Generals Braddock and Forbes, and generations of American Indians watched the movement of their enemies below Chestnut Ridge from Pine Knob. There should be lots of color with many leaves already off the trees for this mid-autumn hike. See the Pittsburgh Meetup Hiking Group for more details. Call Jim Ritchie at 412.576.0849 for more information, reservations, or directions to the meeting spot.

Sat. Oct. 29 ~ Fall colors hike in Quebec Run Wild Area. 9.3 miles. Loop hike. Most trails are along the streams of the area. This will be a joint trip with Meetup so there is a limit to the number of hikers. Signing up early is recommended. \$11 suggested carpool fee - 65 miles each way. Contact Bruce Sundquist, bsundquist1@windstream.net.

Sun. Oct. 30 ~ Enjoy a 9-mile advanced intermediate hike in McConnells Mill State Park from Alpha Pass through the covered bridge and through Walnut Flats to Hells Hollow with a side trip to some water falls. Bring a walking stock for the rugged terrain. Meet at 9 AM at the north end of Cranberry Mall between Michaels and the AT&T building. \$5 suggested carpool fee - 31 miles from Cranberry Mall including the car shuttle. Donna Allen will lead the trip. Contact John Dern at jdern@peoplepc.com. This will be a joint Sierra Club - Meetup trip.

Sun. Nov. 6 ~ Rain date for the Oct.30 McConnells Mill State Park trip.

Sun. Nov. 20 ~ Hike 10 miles from Connellsville to Dawson and return. The return will be along the GAP bike trail along the Youghiogheny River. We will explore some ancient beehive ovens along the way. Meet at Gateway Middle School in Monroeville at 10 AM. This will be a joint trip with Meetup. Limit is 15 people. \$8 suggested carpool fee - 40 miles each way. Call Ed Divers, 412-828-5154.



Group photo on our Memorial Day weekend backpack trip on Dolly Sods North. Photo by Tom O'Donnell.

Sun. Nov 20 ~ New Florence Game Lands - In Memory of Dave; We'll hike from the New Florence gamelands up to the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail on a Forest Service Road, follow it for awhile, then take another Forest Service Road back to where we parked. Total distance is about 10.5 miles. This hike was a favorite of Dave Mottorn and will be dedicated to his memory. While I won't match Big Dave's pace or distance, I hope my modest tribute will bring a smile to his lips and as he frequently said "This hike will pay for a lot of sins". And, we'll stop at Clem's after the hike in the event it's open. See the Pittsburgh Meetup Hiking Group for more details. Call Jim Ritchie at 412.576.0849 for more information, reservations, or directions to the meeting spot.

Check out our outings list online:
www.alleghenysc.org

Note: Nearly all Allegheny Group outings are now done jointly with Pittsburgh Hiking Meetup Group, so most trips fill up to the limit soon after being posted.

SIERRA CLUB 2012 CALENDARS



Calendars can also be ordered online at www.alleghenysc.org using a credit card.

ORDER FORM	Cost	Quantity	Total
Engagement Calendar	\$13.50	_____	_____
Wilderness Wall Calendar	\$12.50	_____	_____
<i>Make checks payable to Allegheny Group, Sierra Club. Send check and order form to: Harry Back, 180 Thornberry Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15235 · harryback@verizon.net · 412-241-6425</i>			
		Subtotal	_____
		Shipping & Handling *	_____
		Total	_____

* Prices include sales tax and a ten percent discount.
 * Shipping & Handling: For calendars to the same address, add \$3.50 for one item and \$0.50 for each additional item.

Ship to

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Western Pennsylvania Hiking Guides

	Cost	Quantity	Total
Allegheny National Forest Hiking Guide	\$9.95	_____	_____
Laurel Highlands: a Hiking Guide	\$8.95	_____	_____
Hiker's Guide to Laurel Highlands Trail	\$7.00	_____	_____
		Subtotal	_____
	7% Sales Tax (PA residents)		_____
		Shipping*	_____
		Total	_____

Make checks payable to Allegheny Group, Sierra Club. Send check and order form to: Harry Back, 180 Thornberry Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15235 · harryback@verizon.net · 412-241-6425

* Shipping: add \$3.50 for the first item plus \$0.50 for each additional item

Ship to

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Allegheny National Forest Hiking Guide

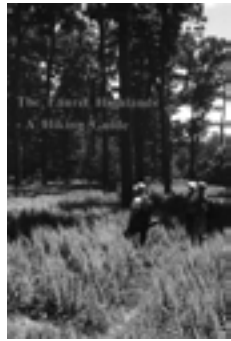
The 800-square mile Allegheny National Forest contains over 250 miles of foot trails for hiking, backpacking and ski-touring. Edition 4 of this guide describes hiking and ski-touring opportunities and points of scenic interest. 192 pages. \$9.95

The Laurel Highlands: A Hiking Guide

This guide to the foot trails of Chestnut Ridge, Laurel Ridge and Allegheny Front covers 446 miles of foot trails, mainly in state forests and state parks. Features: directions to trailheads, ski-touring and backpacking info, difficulty ratings and more. Does not cover Laurel Highlands Trail (see separate guide). 288 pages. \$8.95

Hiker's Guide to Laurel Highlands Trail

The 6th edition of this guide to the 70-mile Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail features: the geology, climate, vegetation and wildlife of Laurel Hill; tree identification; elevation profile; directions to the trailheads; backpacking info and shelter reservations; a list of hiking organizations in the area and more! 128 pages. \$7.00



These trail guides and others can be ordered online at www.alleghenysc.org using a credit card.

Executive Committee Candidates for the 2012-2013 Term

The Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Allegheny Group directs the activities of Sierra Club at the local level. The ExCom meets monthly to set group conservation and political priorities, organize special events, and oversee the raising and expenditure of funds to support these activities. The ExCom consists of nine members, each serving two-year terms. The statements of the candidates running for the four slots for the 2012-2013 term are given below. In addition to these candidates selected by the Nominating Committee, Club members may use the ballot on the next page for a write-in candidate. ExCom members serving the second year of their terms are: Gwen Chute, Roni Kampmeyer, Claudia Kirkpatrick, Matt Peters, and Christopher Shepherd.

Barbara Grover

I became a member of the Executive Committee for the Allegheny Group four years ago with the expectation of enhancing the volunteer experience I had enjoyed the previous three years. My first term surely did that and motivated me to run again. I have been the Secretary for the Group and am currently the Vice Chair. The most significant reason I wish to continue to be a member of the ExCom is that our efforts actually “make a difference”, especially now that we work collaboratively with many other organizations pursuing similar goals. Among our successes are getting the DEP to make reduction of Mercury pollution a priority, stopping new coal-fired plants from being built, getting the habitat of a local variety of mussels protected, and getting the Pittsburgh City Council to enact a series of ordinances to improve air quality, water quality, and working conditions on taxpayer funded projects.

I have worked with the Global Warming Action Team, doing phone banking, distributing information at various local events about our team and the Allegheny Group’s website, attending rallies and obtaining signatures on petitions for various issues to influence local and state decision makers. In addition, Marcellus Shale is a major focus for our team.

Our current Governor’s actions energize me to fight back. So much critical work still needs to be done to make our neighborhoods, our state, and our planet a better place to live and work. For these reasons, I wish to continue as a member of the Executive Committee for the Allegheny Group.

Tom Hoffman

The current Allegheny Group ExCom has led the group to some really major successes in the last few years. Our political program continues to grow and increase in influence. Our relationship with other allies in the community like Pittsburgh UNITED, We Are One and the various other groups working on coal issues has continued to improve. Working with these partners has produced some great victories.

We have passed three pieces of legislation through city council reducing stormwater, diesel emissions and guaranteeing good wages. We have raised awareness of the dangers of coal and stopped construction of some plants.

We have also instituted the very successful team structure.

Our committees on global warming and endangered species have done incredible work on raising awareness on these important issues and recruited hundreds of volunteer hours. I have been on the ExCom for two terms now and would be honored to serve another term and help continue this great record of successes.

Angel Gober

Angel Gober is a passionate community organizer and leader who works on issues of social and economic justice in the City of Pittsburgh. Angel has served as NCFH President of the Board since 2007 and as a Board Member since 2003. Most recently, Angel has spearheaded the organization’s work around Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) funding equity. In addition, Angel is an organizer with CORE - the Coalition of Organized Residents of East Liberty.

Angel has worked as an organizer with labor unions and a variety of community organizations in electoral and issue-based campaigns. As a Canvass Director for the AFL-CIO’s Working America Program, Angel helped turn out thousands of Western Pennsylvania voters for Barack Obama in the 2008 Presidential election. As an organizer at Pittsburgh UNITED, a coalition of labor, community, faith-based and environmental organizations, Angel worked to pass the city’s Prevailing Wage for Service Workers and Clean Water laws in 2010.

Angel continues to volunteer for numerous causes and is looking forward to being Chair of the annual NCFH Women’s Walk for Peace that she co-founded in 2008. Peace & LOVE.

Laura Donovan

I am a Lead Activist with both the Endangered Species and Global Warming Action Teams within the Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club, as well as a Board Member of the Pennsylvania Fair Trade Coalition. I have been active in creating and gathering petitions regarding the addition of Allegheny County to the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration. As a Lead Activist with the Allegheny Group’s Endangered Species team, I was involved with the successful efforts to protect some species of Mussels that are indigenous to Pennsylvania’s own Allegheny River. Also, as a Lead Activist with the Group’s Global Warming Action team, I have been working on issues

Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club

Executive Committee Election Ballot for the 2012-2013 Term

Vote for no more than four candidates by marking an "X" next to the name. If you have a joint membership (signified by a "J" or "JNT" notation on your mailing label), then one member should use the single member column and the other should use the joint member column. You may vote for a write-in candidate by filling in the name in the last spot on the ballot.

Single Member Vote		Joint Member Vote
	Barbara Grover	
	Tom Hoffman	
	Angel Gober	
	Laura Donovan	

Please complete this ballot and mail to:
 Election Ballot
 c/o Sierra Club Allegheny Group
 P.O. Box 8241
 Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Ballots must be postmarked no later than December 15, 2011.

Laura Donovan continued

of air quality and Marcellus Shale in Allegheny County and Southwestern Pennsylvania. I am also involved with the Pennsylvania Fair Trade Coalition.

I was very active in creating and gathering petitions regarding the addition of Allegheny County to the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration and participated in various educational outreach efforts in support of the American Clean

Energy and Security Act (ACES) through the Blue Green Alliance and the United Steelworkers. I am interested in sustainable policies, and I hope to promote practices in our region to preserve environmental and economic viability. I am interested in sustainable policies, and I hope to promote practices in our region to preserve environmental and economic viability.

Dirty Homer City Power Plant Escapes Suit by the EPA

Driving along Rte 22 in Indiana County the billowing clouds from the stacks in the north are obvious. Those stacks are at the coal-fired Homer City power plant, one of the dirtiest plants in the nation. The regional impact of the Homer City plant was highlighted in the 'Mapping Mortality' series in the P-G, and in a July article on highlighted the impact on air quality in New York City. Last week a federal judge dismissed a suit brought by the EPA to hold the owners of the plant accountable for their past violations of the Clean Air Act.

In response to the judge's decision, Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter Conservation Chair Thomas Au issued the following statement:

This judicial decision is a threat to residents of Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey who want to breathe clean air and a slap in the face to everyone who has suffered

unnecessarily from asthma attacks, respiratory disease, and heart attacks for nearly two decades because of the dirty and dangerous Homer City coal plant. The outdated and inefficient Homer City coal plant is one of the largest polluters of harmful sulfur dioxide in the United States, responsible for 660 asthma attacks and 43 premature deaths every year according to the Clean Air Task Force. It is past time for General Electric, the owner of the Homer City coal plant, to replace the power from this polluting behemoth with energy efficiency and clean energy.

Fortunately strong rules from the Environmental Protection Agency will still help clean up the Homer City coal plant and other plants like it in Pennsylvania. For instance, the Cross State Air Pollution Rule will deliver more health benefits to the residents of Ohio and Pennsylvania than any other states in the country, saving residents thousands of lives and tens of billions of dollars.

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Pittsburgh, PA 15217

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Members are Encouraged to Use the Allegheny Group Website www.alleghenysc.org

The Allegheny Group's website is a great source of information about what YOUR organization is doing in Southwestern Pennsylvania and how YOU can participate, from outings, hearings, monthly meetings, and more.

The website is updated weekly, with more than 2,000 visits per month. To join our 'website network', please send your name to pjwray@verizon.net with 'WEBSITE NOTICE' in the Subject line.

Stay Informed—Use Our Website!

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Sierra Club Allegheny Group website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Events, Meetings, Outings, Publications/Gear, Newsletter, Conservation, Politics, and About Us. The main header features the Sierra Club logo (a tree in a circle) and the text "SIERRA CLUB FOUNDED 1892" on the left, and "Sierra Club Allegheny Group" on the right. Below the header is a large landscape photograph of a forested valley. At the bottom of the header, the tagline "Enjoy, Explore, and Protect the Planet" is on the left, and "Sierra Club Allegheny Group, Pennsylvania Chapter" is on the right.

What's New

- [Getting the Fracked Methane Message Out – TV Ads and Video Links](#): ACTION: Donate and spread the word. (October 6, 2011)
- [Changing Forests and Climate Change - Losing a Friendly Canopy](#): Pests and fires are part of the CO2 loop. (October 6, 2011)
- [No More State Forest Drilling \(at least for now\)](#): Secretary Allan sets goals for DCNR. (October 6, 2011)
- [Fracked Methane Update](#): Gov's Plan, Peters Twp, Top 10 Drillers, and Fracing Additional pieces of the week's Marcellus Shale news (October 6, 2011)

Things to do

- [Support 'Truthful Marcellus' TV Ads](#)
- [Let the EPA know what you think of the new rules for gas drilling.](#)
- [Ask President Obama to block Tar Sands Pipeline.](#)
- [Enjoy a Fall outing.](#)

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The Sierra Club's Policy on Fracking

- **Coal Campaign**
- **Global Warming Action Team**
- **Endangered Species Team**
- **ECAT: Mt. Lebanon Action Team**