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The Jersey... SIERRAN

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Reports from Trenton New DEP Dirty Water Rules

From a Press Release, issued on Oct 22, by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel

New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection has proposed a new Water Quality Management Rule, which will determine where sewers go, and thus will have more impact on water quality and planning than any other rule in the state. The DEP calls it "streamlining," but its effect will be to weaken protections and increase development. The Sierra Club regards it as the Christie Administration's purposeful weakening of Highlands and Pinelands laws. On Oct 22nd a rally to save the Highlands against these rules took place at the Statehouse in Trenton.

The rules would allow the DEP to abdicate its authority and review process for Water Quality Master Plan amendments, delegating it to sewage authorities, other state agencies, and towns, and

allowing developers and others to extend sewers into environmentally sensitive areas. There will no longer be DEP oversight or evaluation of environmental impacts like water supply, sprawl, and stormwater discharge. The reason for the old rules was that towns do not have the expertise to evaluate impacts on drinking water of sprawl and other development.

The Christie Administration had previously added over 120,000 acres of sewer service. The new rules would add tens of thousands of additional acres adjacent to water supply streams and reservoirs. They would allow new "package plants," (small local sewage treatment plants), facilitating sprawl. Package plants can have significant environmental impacts when they break down or fail, since raw

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Sustainable Lifestyle Sierra Club Food Policy

By Greg Gorman, Chapter Conservation Chair (ggorman07419@embarqmail.com)

At the Animal Rights National Conference, held in Washington DC last July, I came across a decal reading "Real Environmentalists Don't Eat Meat". Worldwide overgrazing, deforestation to expand rangelands, water consumption by animals and for growing feed-grains, feces-contaminated water; and the greenhouse gases of animal flatus all contribute to environmental degradation. Grazing, particularly on public rangelands, adversely impacts biodiversity. Compared to growing vegetables, it takes three times more water to produce cheese, 14 times more to produce chickens, and 48 times more to produce beef. Ten acres of soybeans will feed 60 people; compare that with ten acres of cows - only two people can be sustained.

Vegans comprise 5% of our U.S. population, abstaining from the consumption of animal products. They extend love and care to all animals, not just family pets. According to the American Dietetic Association, total vegetarian or vegan diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and provide as health benefits the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Among humans, they leave the smallest

ecological footprints on the planet.

So why don't more people substitute protein-rich beans, lentils, grains, nuts, and vegetables for beef, chicken, turkey, and fish? Dr. William Tuttle's book, "The World Peace Diet: Eating for Spiritual Health and Social Harmony" suggests that infant indoctrination, social and marketing pressures, and the reinforcement of good feelings of acquired taste are the factors that influence our food choices. Behaviors and influences we can change!

The Sierra Club's food policy, drafted by a national-level task-force, recognizes the benefits of a vegetable-based diet. The policy states, "Personal dietary choices that minimize or eliminate meat and animal products should be encouraged due to their many benefits, including reducing greenhouse gas impacts, water pollution and inhumane treatment of animals." Do your part and reduce our environmental footprint. If you can't go "whole hog" (sorry!), participate in "Meatless Monday", practice portion control (the USDA recommended allowance for a portion of meat is only 3.6 ounces - not a 16 oz. sirloin), and ask your grocers and restaurateurs for vegan/vegetarian options.

Governor Christie Bad for the Environment

By Chapter Director Jeff Tittel (jeff.tittel@sierraclub.org)

With Governor Christie's campaign for President, he has become an absentee Governor. But his record on the environment shows that he has been running for President since he first took office as Governor - by aligning himself with the right wing of the Republican Party. On his first day in Trenton, he signed an Executive Order reducing New Jersey's environmental standards to those of the federal government. Then he started to dismantle other environmental protections. He cares more about the voters in New Hampshire than the environment in New Jersey, and the only science he cares about is political science.

While he's recently made some positive

remarks on climate change, his record shows that he is in lock-step with the climate change deniers and people like Ted Cruz and Bobby Jindal. First he closed the Office of Climate Change, and then he eliminated NJ's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) programs for climate change adaptation, and pulled us out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. He cut the Energy Master Plan's renewable energy goals from 30 to 22 percent, stole more than a billion dollars from the Clean Energy Fund, and opposed Pres. Obama's Clean Power Plan. For the first time in a decade, our state has seen an increase in carbon pollution. Since he's taken office, solar jobs

Sierra Club Celebrates Environmental Heroes

By Jeff Tittel (jeff.tittel@sierraclub.org)

On Nov 8 our Chapter hosted its Annual Appreciation Day event to recognize the great work being done by Sierra Club volunteers, lawmakers and other activists to protect New Jersey's environment. About 40 of us gathered at an historic farmhouse on the Princeton Day School campus.

Honoring Senator Ray Lesniak:

State Senator Raymond J. Lesniak has led the legislature on environmental protection for over three decades. His achievements include laws providing for toxic clean-ups, clean water, and the protection of animals. He helped pass our Safe Drinking Water Act, the Pesticide Control Act, and New Jersey's Environmental Cleanup Responsibility Act. This year his resolution SCR180 overturned clean water roll-backs; other legislation includes the bear education bill, opposition to leg-hold traps, and challenge to the DEP's paltry Exxon-Mobil cleanup settlement.

Honoring Margo Pellegrino:

We extolled Margo Pellegrino's canoeing activism that has revolutionized how we raise awareness in New Jersey and across the United States. Her tireless efforts to protect water quality, especially in the Delaware River, included a canoe paddle from Newark to Chicago.

Honoring Todd Bates:

We applauded Todd Bates for 30 years of environmental journalism: reporting on Barnegat Bay, toxic site activity (and inactivity), and the lack of enforcement at DEP. His work has helped to change New Jersey's environmental policy for the better.



Photos: Top: State Senator Ray Lesniak. Above: Todd Bates with Ken Johanson and Jeff Tittel. At right: Bonnie Tillery (at right) with Gina Carola, Eric Hausker and Joe Leist.

Honoring Volunteer Bonnie Tillery:

Bonnie Tillery is our Volunteer of the Year. As our Population Issues Coordinator, she contributes a regular column to this Newsletter. She continues to work for funding for education, especially for women and girls, and access to reproductive health care. Her frequent Letters to Editors have been published in state-wide newspapers. She participates in our many Lobby Days to support policy for population and women's rights. Bonnie is often the face of the New Jersey Chapter in tabling at community events, recruiting new activist members and leaders. She is currently working with a new Population volunteer who was sent to Washington DC for Sierra Club

Population training after Bonnie's recommendation and support.

Ken Johanson, Chapter Chair, commended her especially for "working tirelessly to promote women's health care, voluntary access to family planning and improved educational opportunities for women and girls, recognizing that when women are able to decide on the size and spacing of their families they generally will choose to have smaller families, which results in less stress on the environment."

Many Club members contributed to the high spirits of the annual event, which included as attendees Congressman Frank Pallone and State Senator Linda Greenstein. Joan and George Denzer, and Wynn Johanson did the primary organizing and food gathering, but many others brought fancy deserts, and four students tended bar and served snacks: Danielle Denney, Amanda Gusrang, James Coll, Melissa Varanyak. Photo credits go to Wynn Johanson and David Yennior.



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Conservation Chair's Report

People's Climate Movement

By Greg Gorman (ggorman07419@embarqmail.com)

"Think globally, act locally" has long been a mantra for the environmental community. Simply stated, people need to consider the well-being of the planet and then take appropriate action in their own communities. In keeping with this principle, the Sierra Club has aligned with the People's Climate Movement to engage communities across the U.S. and create grassroots momentum for bold action on climate. Sponsored events in October and November focused on preparing for the international climate negotiations in Paris that took place later in November, shortly after this newsletter went to press. In 2016 we will need to work to meet and over-achieve the anticipated new carbon reduction goals.

2016 is a federal election year, with the opportunity to challenge environmentally irresponsible Congresspersons. For a third year in a row, NJ's Congressman Scott Garrett (R, 5th Dist.) received a "climate-denier" award. As a self-avowed libertarian, you would expect him to oppose energy-subsidies for ethanol, solar, and wind; yet, he consistently supports subsidies for fossil (and not renewable) fuels. As senior member of the Budget Committee, you would also expect a full accounting of the impacts of his decisions; yet he voted to force federal agencies to hide the economic costs of extreme weather and other

climate change impacts. As a conservative, you would expect him to recognize the adverse health, environmental, and climatic impacts of fossil fuels on security and our growing national debt - but no! We can ill-afford to allow "denialism" to cloud our Nation's actions as our planet cooks!

Advances in renewable technologies suggest that we no-longer need to rely on fossil fuels. Imagine no poison emissions from your local natural gas compressor station, no scarring of our parks with fracking pads and strip mines, no contamination of our surface waters and aquifers from oil leaks, and no exploding Bakken trains. So what is missing?

This year it is important that we elect public leaders willing to direct a clean energy economy. Let's put a price on carbon. Former U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz endorses the Citizen's Climate Lobby's proposal to eliminate energy subsidies, substituting a "carbon fee and dividend." Their Solutions Project has mapped out a transition to wind, water, and solar energy for all States and for all purposes (electricity, transportation, heating/cooling, and industry) by 2050. The Sierra Club recently published an action plan to support its "Beyond Oil" goal to reduce U.S. oil consumption by 50% by 2030. We can build a better a future!

West Jersey Group Chair's Report

Stratford Lowers Carbon Footprint

By Gina Carola (ginaceee@verizon.net)

In a never ending quest to lower the carbon footprint of the town and become as green as possible, Stratford (Camden County) has replaced 422 street lights with LEDs, an energy-saving technology. The town partnered with Atlantic City Electric Co. to replace 62 streetlights using \$53,000 from the Camden County Improvement Authority and a \$350,000 bond to replace the other 360. Councilman Michael Maloney predicts an annual savings of approximately \$54,000; so a 6-7-year payback. Mayor John

Gentless, the first mayor in Camden County to sign on to the Sierra Club's Cool Cities Initiative, said the town had been looking for new ways to save. Besides the savings on the electric bill, there is a big savings in maintenance - since the life span of LED bulbs is about 20 years. "The switch to LED was a no-brainer," Gentless said. He added that the transformation is one of the many steps the town is taking to benefit Stratford taxpayers. "We're hoping the residents see the town in a whole new light."

Report from Trenton

Bear Facts: Bear Management Plan Not Enough

On Nov 16th a new Black Bear Management Plan was adopted by New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). It would not have pleased New Jersey's Department of Bear Protection (if such an agency existed). The new plan not only continues the December hunt, but establishes an October hunting season starting in 2016. It also expands the area for hunting to include all or portions of Hunterdon, Passaic, Morris, Somerset, Sussex, Warren, and Bergen counties. The new plan adds bow-hunting and increases the allowed take from one to two bears per harvest. Alas, but it fails to include an effective education plan, so that the frequency of bear "incidents" in New Jersey is likely to increase.

Our Chapter of the Sierra Club has proposed a real bear management plan, one that educates the public to live safely with bears, using warning signs in bear-country and educational materials at trail heads, and enforcing a prohibition on feeding bears, and garbage management. We need more conservation managers to

implement the program, and to provide bear aversion therapy to reduce incidents. Increased hunting has not worked in the past to reduce bear incidents.

Hunts in the Ramapo State Forest for the past five years have not solved the problem of aggressive bears. In 2015, the Forest was closed for two weeks due to bear incidents that were not reduced by the killing of four aggressive bears.

Allowing bow-hunting is likely to be counter-productive, because most arrows do not kill their targets. Rather, bears are wounded and thus angered, which not only threatens public safety but is inhumane.

We support current Bear Bill legislation: S687 (Lesniak) and A4017 (Eustace), is the first positive step toward managing bears in New Jersey. This bill would require the use of bear resistant containers, dumpsters and food boxes in black bear habitat. It would manage bears by reducing their food supply, which motivates females to produce fewer cubs, and reduces aggression in adults.

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Population Issues Coordinator's Report

The Millennium Development Goals transition to Sustainable Development Goals

By Bonnie Tillery (blt44blt@msn.com)

Sixteen years ago, in 2000, 189 United Nations members and 23 international organizations adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a target of reducing worldwide poverty by 2015 through education, improved health, equality and environmental stewardship. How did the world fare in meeting those eight ambitious and wide-ranging goals?

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. The number of people living on \$1.25 a day went from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 836 million in 2015. While huge gains were made, the goal was not met. A report in The Guardian from July 6, 2015, notes: "...Estimates suggest around 795 million people are undernourished - the overwhelming majority of them in developing regions. Progress has been hindered by higher food and energy prices, extreme weather, natural disasters, political instability, humanitarian crises and the economic recession(s) of the late 1990s and in 2008-2009." The world's poorest people (60%) live in five countries: India, Nigeria, China, Bangladesh and Democratic Republic of Congo.

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education. While the enrollment rate has risen from 83% in 2000 to 91% this year, this falls short of the goal. However, the number of children out of school fell from 100 million 15 years ago to 57 million in 2015.

MDG 3: Promote general equality and empower women. Two-thirds of developing countries now have primary education for both boys and girls, but are still lacking when it comes to giving girls a secondary education. More women are entering the political arena but discrimination, violence against women and girls, unequal employment opportunities and unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work have been contributors in this goal falling short.

MDG 4: Reduce Child Mortality by two-thirds. Deaths did fall from 90 per 1,000 live births to 43, in part because of vaccines; however, children under five in developing countries continue to die from preventable causes such as pneumonia, diarrhea and malaria at the horrendous rate of 16,000 per day.

MDG 5: Improve maternal health. Maternal deaths have fallen by nearly one-half, but the goal of three-quarters reduction was not achieved. Postpartum hemorrhage, complications from high blood pressure during pregnancy and complications from delivery and unsafe abortion were causes.

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Although the number of new HIV infections fell 40% between 2000 and 2013, risky sexual behavior and lack of education about HIV infection among young people has kept this goal from being reached. The good news is that halting and reversing the incidence of malaria has been achieved thanks to a tenfold increase in international financing.

MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability. Here is another bright spot in that 2.6 billion more people now have access to improved drinking water, a goal reached in 2010. However, 663 million still lack this necessity. While 2.1 billion people now have access to improved sanitation, 2.4 billion in developing countries still lack access, leaving this part of the goal not reached.

MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development. The amount of assistance

developed countries gave between 2000 and 2014 increased by 66% in trying to reach this goal.

Because the eight Millennium Development Goals were not reached in their entirety, does not mean efforts should be abandoned. The current 193 member states of the United Nations think the world should be even more ambitious, and have set 17 goals with 169 targets to end poverty by 2030, and promote shared economic prosperity, social development and environmental protection. These new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will address the root causes of poverty and the need for development that works for everyone. The previous 15 years lifted millions out of poverty and created opportunities for better lives. Those continue to be the overarching goals moving forward.

New goals will include all countries in addressing inequality, unsustainable consumption, inadequate infrastructure and lack of decent jobs. Goals include ocean and marine resources, ecosystems and biodiversity.

Writing for the Guttmacher Policy Review, Alanna Galati notes, "It's significant that sexual and reproductive health and rights issues are now recognized explicitly and from the outset as integral to the achievement of the SDGs..." They encompass goals that include health, education and gender equality. Galati goes on to state: "Ultimately, money and political will need to come together to turn the SDG declaration into action. As the single largest donor to the developing world - for family planning and reproductive health assistance, as well as more generally - the United States has been a strong leader in this area for decades. At this important global moment, U.S. leadership is once again vital."

This is where we can help. We can contact our legislators in Washington to ensure \$1 billion is funded for international family planning so that 225 million women and families around the world can make their own decisions about whether to have children, when to have children, and birth spacing for the optimum health of mother and child. When women make their own decisions, they generally choose smaller families which, along with reduced consumption on our part, puts less stress on the planet's dwindling resources. While \$1 billion sounds like a lot of money, in 2015 we as a country spent \$6.9 billion on Halloween treats and decorations. Surely a worthy effort in extending reproductive rights to women deserves a fraction of that amount.

In speaking about the new SDGs, Ban Ki-moon, U.N. secretary general, said: "... Looking ahead to the next 15 years...we can deliver on our shared responsibility to end poverty, leave no one behind and create a world of dignity for all."

Sources used for this report include: Sierra Club fact sheet "The Millennium Development Goals: 8 Steps to a Sustainable Future"; "Consensus Reached in New Sustainable Development Agenda to be Adopted by World Leaders in September" UN blog7/15/15; "UN: 15-year push ends extreme poverty for a billion people" Sam Jones, The Guardian, 7/6/15; Guttmacher Policy Review, Vol. 18, No. 4, 2015.

WEBMASTER NEEDED URGENTLY

To maintain the Chapter's Website. Contact Rich Isaac (risaacx@aol.com)

Editorial

An Environmental Take on Taxes

By Dick Colby (dick.colby@stockton.edu)

There seems to be a phobia, especially among Republicans such as Gov. Christie, about raising taxes. It extends even to funding the maintenance of our roads and bridges by New Jersey's comparatively very low tax on gasoline – a tax that many environmentalists would like to see raised substantially. I experience the phobia in my own business, which is teaching at a New Jersey state college, in the reduced funding of higher education, such that state support during my 40-year career has been reduced from about 70% of the cost of operating the state colleges to less than 20%. (The difference is now made up, of course, by tuition that is approaching that charged by private colleges.) The environment has also suffered, with drastic cuts to the budgets of the Division of Parks and Forestry, wildlife agencies, and other branches of the state's Department of Environmental Protection.

In defending the phobia, one hears of the need to reduce the "size of government," or at least to prevent it from growing. I suggest such an attitude is misguided for a fundamental economic reason: as manufacturing jobs in New Jersey have been outsourced to China and other low-wage countries, and as many service jobs are now outsourced for the same reason, government jobs may be the only way to employ a growing fraction of the workforce. Government salaries tend to be lower than those of the private sector – that's certainly true for my faculty colleagues – the compensation is tenure! – so a given amount of money can employ more people in government jobs than in private-sector jobs.

Most middle-class Americans seem to me to be wealthy enough to be able to

afford higher taxes. As I observe the proportion of new and expensive (and gas-guzzling) cars on the roads, and the amount of money "wasted" on gambling, night-life, shopping sprees, weekends in Florida, expensive homes and apartments, elaborate recreational equipment, expensive restaurants, etc., I'm reminded of how much less expensive my own lifestyle is, whereby I think I live quite well on \$10,000 a year. I feel so fortunate to be able to enjoy the benefits of our semi-democratic and tolerant society, not to mention my enjoyment of local wilderness, that I would gladly pay (and could easily afford) double my current taxes.

I have long puzzled over Adam Smith's "invisible hand": the notion that a free-market economic system will automatically provide jobs for everyone. It was more true before 1900, when 80% of the jobs were on farms. But today only 5% of the work force is sufficient to provide food for all. What are the rest of us to do? There's a limit to the number of people who are needed to serve fast food. Two of my Stockton University colleagues have just published a book decrying the exploitation of workers in Atlantic City's casinos ("Just One More Hand: Life in the Casino Economy"). Surely the vast surplus wealth brought by modern technology could be harnessed wisely to provide better government services staffed by more government employees.

The need to reduce global warming seems a powerful motive for people to want to live less environmentally extravagantly: in small, energy-efficient, walkable row-houses, without cars, with less "stuff," and paying more in taxes to enable more people to be employed.

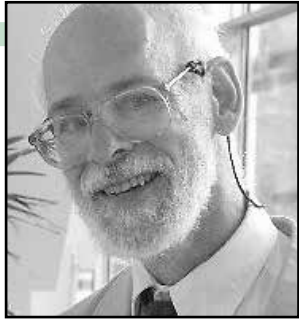
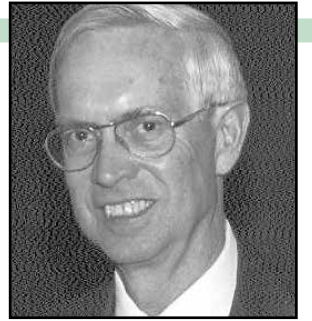


photo: James Mendelsohn

Chair's Message

Swan Song

By Ken Johanson (kjohan@comcast.net)



It was ten years ago this past January that I took over as chair of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club. I knew it was going to be a major commitment on my part, but I really didn't know how much of a commitment. Well, I learned.

One of the reasons I was attracted to the Sierra Club upon my retirement from the practice of law was the emphasis of the Club upon grassroots involvement. I had done some work for a couple of environmental organizations for which I still have a great deal of respect prior to reaching out to the Sierra Club, but they were pretty much staff-driven organizations. I was looking for an organization where a volunteer like me could actually play an active role in setting goals and figuring out how best to achieve those goals. The Sierra Club turned out to be a perfect fit.

But it's been 11 years and I think it's time for me to move on and provide one of our other volunteers with an opportunity to lead the Chapter. (If I were about to be indicted this is where I would say that I am stepping down in order to spend more time with my family.) So effective January 2016 I will step down as chair. But that doesn't mean that I will not continue to be involved with the Chapter. Subject to the approval of the new Chapter chair and the executive committee, I hope to continue to serve as a member of the fundraising, finance, legislative and litigation committees. And I will continue to serve as a member of the Chapter executive committee until the end of my current term.

So now that I am stepping down, what words of wisdom or insights do I have to offer? I think it's a mistake to think that just because someone is stepping down from a position that he or she is particularly qualified to impart advice and wisdom on those who will follow. But I would like to say that serving as chair of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club has been one of the most rewarding, and demanding, experiences of my life. I have met and worked with so many wonderful people, including staff mem-

bers, volunteers, members and supporters. I'm so pleased that I was given this opportunity.

And I would like to mention a few of the things that I believe the New Jersey Chapter has going for it and that set us apart from other environmental organizations. We have a small but dedicated and highly effective staff, we do not rely upon corporate and governmental funding for our support, which helps us to preserve our objectivity and independence, and we rely heavily upon our volunteers for their ongoing involvement and expertise.

But one of the ongoing challenges we face is to keep our volunteers focused and on the same page. We don't always agree, but when we do disagree it is important that we do so in a spirit of collegiality and respect for the opinions of others. We need to be able to work together if we are to have any hope of achieving our goals and making the world a better place for all of its human and nonhuman inhabitants, including those of us who call the State of New Jersey our home.

One of the things I will miss when I step down as Chapter Chair is the opportunity to write this quarterly column. Over the past years I have written 46 columns, first as vice chair and then as chair, dealing with a wide range of topics. If you would like to review any of my past columns, most of which I believe remain relevant today, or are just trying to figure out how best to deal with a sleep disorder, prior issues of the Jersey Sierran are available on our web site. But while this is the last of my quarterly columns, I do hope that Dick Colby, the editor of this newsletter, will permit me to publish a guest column from time to time if I feel inspired.

And finally, thanks to everyone who has assisted me, supported me, and worked with me as Chapter Chair over the past 11 years. And thanks especially to my wife Wynn who has always been there when I needed her.

Resolutions:

Passed by the Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) in October and November, 2015

Litigation was authorized to challenge rules recently adopted under the NJ Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA). (Oct)

A late political endorsement was made for the Nov 3 legislative election: of Avery Hart (D) in LD26. (Her bid was unsuccessful.) (Oct)

Two additional changes were recommended with regard to the function of the Club's national Council of Club Leaders, which meets annually in the Fall, attended by Rich Isaac. (Oct)

Another lawsuit was proposed: challenging the State and the Pinelands Commission over its procedures for handling the application for a natural gas pipeline to serve the BL England electricity-generating plant in Cape May County. (Nov)

WEBMASTER NEEDED URGENTLY

To maintain the Chapter's Website. Contact Rich Isaac (risaacx@aol.com)

DEP RULES

(Continued from page 1)

sewage would enter groundwater. In some cases, wastewater treatment "package" plants will permanently impact the aquifer. The Christie Administration has increased the service area for package plants from 80 housing units to 200 units, which would promote sprawl.

Highlands Rollbacks

In the Highlands' Forest Preservation Area, which is the most environmentally sensitive area of the Highlands, it will quadruple development. The current rule allow one septic systems per 88 acres; the proposal is for one per 22 acres. The Christie Administration is attacking regional planning for the benefit of developers and polluters. The

Governor has already stacked the Highlands Council with cronies who have weakened rules for flood hazard and stormwater, damaging Category One (trout-quality) streams. Highlands' water is found in everything from M&M's to Tylenol, Goya beans to Budweiser. This proposal puts the water supply of 5.4 million people in the Highlands at risk.

The New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club has launched a coalition to stop this dangerous rule. Please contact Jeff or our other staff for updates, more information, and to join the coalition.

The proposed rule can be found at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/wrm/wqmp-rule.html>.

GOV. CHRISTIE

(Continued from page 1)

Rules, Stormwater Management Rules, and proposed to roll back the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules. The effect has been to increase development in areas that are at high risk for flooding, putting more people and property in harm's way.

The Christie Administration has weakened protections for water in New Jersey: blocking the Water Supply Master Plan, and neutering the Water Quality Institute. He signed legislation to promote privatization of water infrastructure systems, which will mean higher costs and lower water quality. He proposed to remove protection for C-1 high quality streams and eliminate buffers. This will increase flooding, water pollution, and siltation of New Jersey's waterways. He has proposed adding thousands of acres of sewer service in the Pinelands, which will threaten the water supply for much of southern New Jersey. He has threatened to increase development in other environmentally sensitive lands in the Highlands and Meadowlands.

Christie has arm-twisted people to push the South Jersey Gas pipeline through the Pinelands, ignoring the pleas of four former governors who opposed it. He supports the dangerous Pilgrim Pipeline, which is New Jersey's version of Keystone XL, and every other pipeline – and he has not vetoed a bill to site a

Liquid Natural Gas terminal off our coast. He has tried to subsidize two gas-fired electric power plants, while blocking offshore wind turbines and failing to promote energy efficiency, which has cost New Jersey thousands of jobs.

His Administration is trying to weaken a pollution lawsuit victory over Exxon-Mobil by settling for only pennies on the dollar. He has wasted more than \$5 billion in corporate subsidies: including building an unnecessary \$800 million American Dream Mall, while cutting DEP funding by one-third. Whenever we get the Legislature to pass a pro-environmental bill, he vetoes it. He even vetoed a ban on smoking in state parks. When the Legislature passes a bad environmental bill, he can't sign it fast enough. He doesn't believe in governance, only media coverage for himself while he is a disaster for New Jersey's health and environment.

Christie is the first recent governor not to leave an environmental achievement as a legacy. Rather, he has the worst environmental record of any governor in history. Governor Byrne produced the Pinelands Protections Act, Governor Whitman protected open space, Governor Kean protected wetlands, and the list goes on. What Christie has done to New Jersey, he will do to the country, if he is elected President.

Interview Welcoming Anna Whitney, our High School Coordinator

Anna is a Senior at Glen Ridge High School in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, having grown up there most of her life. She was recruited to be our High School Coordinator by Rich Isaac. Contact her at annawhitney44@gmail.com. We wish her a lifetime of environmental activism!

1. What is your environmental background? (How did you get interested in the environment? What projects have you attempted and with what outcomes?)

I've been involved with my school's environmental club for a couple of years. With them, I've gone to several local cleanups and a rally in NYC. Generally the club has been pretty sleepy but I really hope to give it lots of new projects to reinvigorate it. This year I went to my school board and asked them to adopt more sustainability measures. They were really receptive, especially the superintendent. I'm working with him now to see more projects implemented this year. Hopefully we can see some real progress in my district. I also got involved with my local community Green Team, which is exciting because they've been dormant for a while but seem to be on the upswing this year. I can't wait to see how this all turns out!

2. What might you hope to accomplish this year? What are your current projects?

I'm really hoping to get more high schoolers involved with environmentalism! My goal is to create a space on the Sierra Club's website where environmen-

tal clubs or interested individuals can get project ideas and learn about ways to help. Then I will be reaching out to schools and getting them involved. Some projects I would like to implement include: calling legislators about specific laws, documentary screenings, and energy efficiency in buildings. I'm open to more ideas and better ways to reach out to people, so please don't hesitate to contact me with suggestions.

3. What are your career goals (if they are relevant to the environment)?

I could see myself becoming an environmental lobbyist, or trying to make renewable energy more affordable, or developing new technologies for energy efficiency.

4. What do you think are the environmental issues most important to the residents of New Jersey?

New Jersey has all the environmental problems that other places have to deal with. To say one issue is the most important is to detract from the others - they're all important. NJ puts up with the destruction of ecosystems, pollution, pipeline invasions, fracking, carbon emissions-you name it! It depends on the person you ask, but most people will agree these are all important problems. We just need to find our voices.



Report from Trenton

The DEP Should Reject Proposed Flood Hazard Rules as a Hazard to NJ

On July 31, we submitted official comments to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding their proposed changes to flood hazard rules. The DEP proposes to weaken the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules, Coastal Zone Management Rules, and Stormwater Management Rules - by failing to take into account the frequency of storms, storm surges, or climate impacts. The proposed rule-changes would also loosen water and habitat protections. They would especially affect New Jersey's Pinelands.

New Jersey has suffered at least 22 major storm events since Governor Christie was sworn in. Instead of strengthening regulations and rules to protect us from flooding, he is doing the opposite, siding with polluters and developers.

The proposed changes include removing headwater protections, allowing property owners to build in vulnerable areas and then use mitigation measures elsewhere, and making it easier for individuals to get permits to build in flood-prone areas. The proposed rules also eliminate Special Water Protection Areas.

Most importantly, the proposed rules would weaken stream buffer requirements. Stream buffers are natural vegetative areas that protect streams from flooding, thermal pollution, and are important habitat corridors. The proposed rule changes would cut back the 300-foot buffers along highest-quality C1 streams, affecting their drinking water quality and suitability for trout.

Buffers absorb polluting nutrients, household and industrial chemicals, and animal wastes, and prevent siltation. Christie even proposes to permit septic fields within 50 feet of a stream. These proposed rules will have major impacts on water quality.

While the (federal) EPA is trying to strengthen water protections under the Clean Water Act, the Christie administration is weakening them, violating the New Jersey Clean Water Act, New Jersey Surface Water Quality Standards, New Jersey Pollution Control Act and Water Quality Planning Act, and the Federal Clean Water Act.

The proposed rules would also remove protections for forest buffers, which are important for water quality and temperature. And they would have a grandfather provision which would unintelligently allow bad old projects to go forward.

Bag Limit in Sight!

Here's some good environmental news: in November, 2015, Longport, the southernmost community on the barrier island that includes Atlantic City (Atlantic County), enacted an ordinance imposing a 10-cent fee for each disposable plastic and paper bag supplied by a shop-keeper - in hope of motivating customers to carry reusable bags. We'll hope that it reduces litter.

Report from Trenton

Christie Fiddles on Port Ambrose LNG While Cuomo Saves the Day

Adapted from a press release issued by our Trenton Staff

The good news is that, on Nov 12, New York's Governor Andrew M. Cuomo vetoed a proposal to construct a floating import/export terminal for liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the middle of Lower New York Bay, between Sandy Hook and Brooklyn. The facility would have compressed or decompressed natural gas, converting it between liquid and gaseous states so that it could be transferred between ships and the regional pipeline transmission system. Many environmental groups including the Sierra Club, as well as many concerned citizens, have been fighting this project for years. Meanwhile, back in Trenton (or Iowa, or New Hampshire), Governor Christie has yet to offer an opinion, either way.

Here's a statement from Jeff Tittel, our Chapter Director: "For a governor who emails and tweets on everything, his silence on Port Ambrose has been deafening. Five years ago he opposed it, but he

has said nothing about it since an Environmental Assessment was released. He had the opportunity to veto it this year but didn't. Nor has he congratulated Governor Cuomo's action. Christie's inconsistency is also demonstrated by his positions on offshore wind, supporting it five years ago but failing to follow through since that time. Perhaps he is holding our coasts hostage to his national political ambition."

The Sierra Club has recently revised its national "Beyond Coal" policy position to a "Beyond Fossil Fuel" position, realizing that natural gas is almost as greenhouse gas-generating as coal and petroleum. We think human societies, worldwide, can, should and must withdraw from their dependency on natural gas and all other fossil fuels. In New Jersey, we should be starting full-scale with offshore wind. (See Greg Gorman's perspective on p.1.)

Notes on Energy

Collected by Conservation Chair Greg Gorman (ggorman07419@embarwqmail.com)

Carpooling to Reduce Energy Use:

Last Summer the U.S. Census Bureau released commuter data for New Jersey, and it didn't look good. Only 8% of our commuters carpool, and 72% drive alone to work. The Sierra Club's "Beyond Oil" campaign has adopted a goal of "50% reduction in oil consumption by 2030." This goal is achievable with emphasis on "healthy communities," "Complete Streets," electric vehicles including local trucks and buses, shifting freight and passengers to electric rail, and encouraging "buy local" programs. With the opportunity to construct new tunnels into New York City, and an anticipated increase in freight traffic resulting from the larger cargo ships entering our ports, a focus on reducing commuter vehicles is imperative.

Why is New Jersey Burning Coal to Make Electricity?

On August 3rd of last year, Pat Hilliard, a member of the Bayonne Nature Club, joined Jeff Tittel, NJ Sierra Club Chapter Director, Mayor Steve Fulop, and others, in Jersey City's Leonard Gordon Park, to support President Barack Obama's Clean Power Plan. He reminded us that PSE&G's Hudson Generating Station is not using scrubber technology existing since the 1970's. The Hudson plant ranked #2 in the NAACP's 2010 report on the nation's

most toxic coal-fired power plants: behind Chicago's Crawford plant. The Crawford plant closed in 2012, but the Hudson dinosaur keeps polluting.

The Two Faces of PSE&G: PSE&G's CEO Ralph Izzo applauded Obama's Clean Power Plan, highlighting the role of energy efficiency in achieving carbon reduction goals (See <http://energizepseg.com/2015/07/10/its-time-for-an-energy-system-based-on-using-less/>) Mr. Izzo noted, "Reducing energy consumption by two percent in New Jersey could put \$130 million in the pockets of consumers and eliminate 1 million tons of carbon emissions - equal to taking 200,000 cars off the road." He suggests, "The regulatory framework will need to be one that provides the right incentives for companies like PSE&G to commit their capital, sowing the seeds of the effort." This approach would allow equitable application for all rate payers. Sounds like a good idea!

Offshore Wind in France: France currently has no offshore wind installed - but that is about to change. On August 5, 2015, France's environmental agency called for proposals for multiple wind farms containing three to six turbines each, manufacturing at least five megawatts per turbine.

MORE PHOTOS FROM APPRECIATION DAY

(Continued from page 1)



Ken and Jeff with Congressman Frank Pallone (D-6)

Political Report: on Nov. Election

2016: A Slightly Different Legislature—and Landscape

by Rich Isaac, Chapter Political Chair (*risaacx@aol.com*)

In November, 2015, the Democrats picked up four seats in the Assembly, where their advantage is now 52-28 (65%) – in an election with very low voter turnout (about 22%), a situation in which Republican candidates usually do better.

To explain this result, many took note of the large campaign contributions to Democratic candidates from the NJEA, the state’s largest teachers’ union, but few noticed what contributions were NOT made.

The Democrats benefited not only from that money, but also from the failure of Republicans to raise competitive funding. We think that was largely because Gov. Christie was out of state during much of the campaign season, concentrating on raising his own money, rather than money for his fellow Republicans. Also, since Christie’s Presidential campaign was already doing poorly by Labor Day, few (if any) nationwide Republican donors thought it advantageous to contribute to Republican candidates in New Jersey: to curry favor with him.

In addition, the Governor’s low favorability ratings (30-35%) discouraged big donations to Republican legislative candidates.

The questions now are (1) whether the millions of dollars spent by the NJEA will pay off as over-rides to the Governor’s vetoes of legislation funding their pensions (that was clearly the teachers’ expectation) and (2) whether the Democrats will now be able to over-ride Christie’s vetoes of good environmental, women’s health, (and other) legislation.

Alternatively, the Democrats may now be more able to force vetoed measures onto the ballot as public referendums. That would really change the political landscape.

The New Jersey Governorship is perhaps the most powerful in the nation, and Gov. Christie is still at the helm, but some of his fellow Republicans in the Legislature may now be willing to challenge some of his anti-environmental vetoes.

Jeff Tittel reminds us that strongly Republican legislative districts in New Jersey come in two flavors: some are dominated by **moderate** Republicans, and are therefore capable of electing moderate Democrats (as in Districts 01, 11 and 16 in 2015), and some are dominated by **conservative** Republicans.

Congratulations to our 28 successful endorsed candidates: all of the incumbents, plus Troy Singleton (D, 07). The four new Democrats in the Legislature are in Districts 01, two in 11, and in 16.

MORE PHOTOS FROM APPRECIATION DAY



At Left: X, Rich Isaac, Jon Wall and John Kashwick



At Right: Elaine and Ken Dolsky with Toni Granato



At Left: Anne Mandal and Joe Testa



At Right: Our Helpers: Danielle Denney, Amanda Gusrang, James Coll, Melissa Varanyak

BEARS

(Continued from page 2)

The Christie Administration has cut the number of conservation officers who handle bear complaints and education. \$2 million in funding was cut from non-lethal bear management programs, including Bear Aversion Therapy. It has also eliminated virtually all education programs on how to live in bear country, bear-proof one’s property, and deal safely with garbage.

We advocate Bear Aversion Therapy: methods make bears afraid of people so they are less likely to create incidents. When we tag bears we should make them afraid of people by using air horns, rubber bullets and bean bags.

The primary mission of the Sierra Club is to protect wilderness. The black bear is a symbol that New Jersey still has wild places.

YOU HAVE MORE TO GIVE THAN YOU KNOW
 Maybe you can’t make a gift to protect the environment during your lifetime, but you can become a financial hero by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. You can even direct your gift to a special Club program or to the New Jersey Chapter.
 For information about making a bequest to the New Jersey Chapter call George Denzer at 609-799-5839.



Group News

FROM AROUND THE STATE

HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR GROUP (BY COUNTY)

- Skylands Group:** Sussex & northern Warren
- South Highlands Group:** Hunterdon & southern Warren
- North Jersey Group:** Bergen & Passaic
- Gateway Group:** Essex
- Hudson Area Network:** Hudson
- Loantaka Group:** Morris & Union
- Central Jersey Group:** Mercer
- Raritan Valley Group:** Somerset & Middlesex
- Jersey Shore Group:** Monmouth
- Ocean County Group:** Ocean
- West Jersey Group:** Burlington, Camden & Gloucester
- South Jersey Group:** Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland & Salem

These designations are approximate; members are welcome to participate in whichever Group(s) they find convenient

(Groups are arranged in rough geographical sequence: North to South)

Skylands Group

(Sussex and northern Warren Counties)

WEB-SITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/skylands/> Or click from the NJ Chapter’s web-site.

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC>

E-MAIL: skylandsgroup@gmail.com

OFFICERS: (All are members of the Group Executive Committee.)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| Chair: | Susan Williams | 973-222-0274 | skylandsgroup@gmail.com |
| Vice & | | | |
| Political Chair: | Edgar Sheperd | | shepherd_edgar@yahoo.com |
| Treasurer: | Jeri Doherty | | bjd42@nac.net |
| Secretary: | Norene Haberski | | habersn@yahoo.com |
| Conservation Chair: | Greg Gorman | | ggorman07419@embarqmail.com |
| Outings Chair: | Dave Alcock | | dwhoob@hotmail.com |
| Acting Publicity Chair: | Jeri Doherty | | bjd42@nac.net |
| Membership Chair: | <i>Open Position!</i> | | |
| Programs/ | | | |
| Events Chair: | <i>Open Position!</i> | | |
| Ex-Com | | | |
| Members-at-Large: | Dave Alcock | | dwhoob@hotmail.com |
| | Marvin Feil | | mfeil@writeme.com |

ACTIVITIES: We provide education about a variety of environmental issues by hosting movies or speakers at our general meetings. We also provide information to residents by tabling at town days and other events throughout the spring/summer/fall seasons.

We join with other grassroots organizations to protect the natural resources and beauty of our environmentally sensitive area in Northwest NJ. Some of our activism includes protecting open space, maintaining water quality, promoting clean energy, and addressing local, national and global environmental issues as they arise. We participate in activities to protect the Delaware River Basin and oppose hydro-fracking and all the subsequent infrastructure needed for it. The Skylands Group also sponsors hikes and other outings throughout the region to encourage people to reconnect with the outdoors.

GENERAL MEETINGS: SECOND TUESDAY of the month from 7-8:30pm at the Unitarian Fellowship, One W. Nelson St, Newton. Best check electronic sites for more current information.

All Events are posted on our FaceBook website and the online events calendar on the Chapter website. We also advertise on various media sites throughout the Skylands region.

(continued on page 6)

GROUP NEWS

(Continued from page 5)

South Highlands Group

(Hunterdon and southern Warren Counties)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/south-highlands/>

MEETUP: <http://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/53817136187/>

OFFICERS:

Chair:	Jonathan Wall*	psychologist@jonwall.com
Vice Chair:	Celeste Martin*	oncentral@mac.com
Conservation Chair:	Cinny MacGonagle*	cmacgonagle@yahoo.com
Secretary:	Amy Weeder*	aweeder@comcast.net
Treasurer:	Celeste Martin*	oncentral@mac.com
Political Chair:	Debbie Young*	debyoung31@comcast.net
Publicity Chair:	Susan Schirmer*	soupys@att.net
Membership Chair:	Jim Fleming*	jffleming18@comcast.net
Outings Coordinator:	Jonathan Wall*	psychologist@jonwall.com
Webmaster:	Jonathan Wall*	psychologist@jonwall.com

(*Group Executive Committee Member)

Unless otherwise noted, meetings and outings are free and open to general public, but donations are accepted. Please check our web site, Meetup page, or Facebook page (see above for URLs) as these as topics, dates, times, and venues are subject to change.

GENERAL MEETINGS: All our general meetings are held at the North Hunterdon Library, 65 Halstead St, Clinton 08809 on the first Wednesday of each month. Meet and Greet at 7pm followed by program at 7:15. Meetings are free but donations are gladly accepted.

Jan. 6 (Wed): New Jersey Park Commission's Great Swamp Study. In the spring of 2015, an overabundance of coyotes stalked Lord Sterling Park in Basking Ridge NJ. On one side of the park, herds of white tailed deer sauntered around while few ventured to the other side of the park. What was the reason? The Environmental Education Center of Somerset County Park Commission purchased four trail cameras to monitor the wildlife and tonight, we'll hear the answer to this mystery.

Feb 3 (Wed): New Jersey's Top Ten Environmental Challenges. Jeff Tittel, Executive Director of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, will describe the ten top environmental challenges for the next decade, and steps each of us can take.

Mar 2 (Wed): Assessing Forest Health in Central New Jersey. Dr. Jay F. Kelly (Raritan Valley Community College), Dr. Nellie Tsipoura and Mike Allen (NJ Audubon), and student participants have been working in partnership since 2013 to engage students and citizen scientists on issues affecting forest health, focusing on the effects of deer and invasive plant species on forest structure and composition, and how this translates into impacts on birds and other forest-dwelling species. We will share the preliminary results of the first two years of these intensive studies of forest bird and plant communities by student interns and citizen scientists, outreach made to local officials to improve forest health, and student research projects focusing on ticks, deer and other factors.

OTHER EVENTS:

Jan 13 (Wed): Executive Committee/Planning Meeting. 7pm at the office of Dr. Jonathan Wall, 27 Center St, Clinton. This is the quarterly meeting of the Executive Committees of the South Highlands Group. The meeting is casual and informative. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn more about the Club, hear about and discuss issues, plan future events, and become more active. Please check the on-line calendar of events to confirm. For more information please contact Jonathan at psychologist@jonwall.com.

Feb 8 (Sun): Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge Hike, 1pm. Easy hike (approx. 4 miles) along scenic roads within the refuge. We will meet at the Helen C. Fenske Visitor Center (32 Pleasant Plains Rd., Harding Twp). We will then walk along Pleasant Plains Rd, which offers open vista opportunities to observe a variety of species, including northern harrier, woodcock and red-tailed hawk. Last year we were lucky enough to spot an Eagle! Well behaved dogs permitted. Leaders are Celeste Martin (oncentral@mac.com) and Jim Fleming (jffleming18@comcast.net). Bring snack. Registration required. Rain, snow, ice, or extreme cold cancels—email leader on the morning of the outing if in doubt.

Mar 26 (Sat): Sunfish Pond Hike, 10am. Meet at in Dunham Creek parking lot right off of I-80 West just before state line with Pennsylvania. Moderate to Strenuous Hike up to outlook along the fire trail to the pond and then down along the Dunham Creek back to the parking lot. Plan on a minimum of 6 hours of hiking. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Well behaved dogs permitted. Leader: Jim Fleming (jffleming18@comcast.net). Bring snack. Registration required at www.meetup.com/njsierraclub. Rain, snow, ice, or extreme cold cancels—email leader on the morning of the outing if in doubt.

North Jersey Group

(Bergen and Passaic Counties)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey>

MEETUP: <http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/northjerseysierraclub>

Officers:

Chair:	John Kashwick *	jkashwick@gmail.com
Vice Chair:	Mary Ellen Shaw *	meshaw.001@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Tom Thompson *	etrans743@aol.com
Secretary:	Jennifer Rothschild *	jenniroth2@gmail.com
Conservation Co-Chair:	Mary Ellen Shaw *	meshaw.001@gmail.com
Conservation Co-Chair:	Laura Tracey Coll *	lauratraceycoll@hotmail.com

Political Chair:	Jermaine Spence	spencejermaine@hotmail.com
Air Quality Issues:	Laura Tracey Coll *	lauratraceycoll@hotmail.com
Climate Issues:	Jeff Rapaport	jeffrap@optonline.net
Fundraising Chair:	Francie Goldstein	franciegoldstein@mindspring.com
Membership Chair:	Buddy Jenssen *	buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Outings Co-Chair:	Ellen Blumenkrantz	eblumenkrantz@hotmail.com
Outings Co-Chair:	Mary Walsh *	blehlwalsh@hotmail.com
Programs Chair:	Open Position	
Publicity Chair:	Marty Cohen	martincohen@verizon.net
Social Media Coor.:	Ariana Schanzer	arianaschanzer@gmail.com
Trail Maintenance:	Marty Cohen	martincohen@verizon.net
Webmaster/Listmaster:	John Kashwick *	jkashwick@gmail.com
Wildlife Issues:	Mary Ellen Shaw *	meshaw.001@gmail.com
Ex-Com at-Large:	Nancy Wysocki *	nape2@aol.com
Ex-Com at-Large:	Beth Ravit *	ravit@envsci.rutgers.edu

(*Group Executive Committee Member)

MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

Unless otherwise noted, meetings and outings are free and open to general public. Please confirm topics, dates, times, and venues of our meetings by visiting our web site, Meetup page, or Facebook page (see above for URLs) as these are subject to change. You can also email us at northjerseysierraclub@gmail.com.

Jan 1 (Fri): New Year's Day Hike. 1pm, Haworth. We'll walk along the Oradell Reservoir in Haworth for approximately 2-3 miles to ease into 2016 with this gentle social hike. Meet at 200 Lake Shore Drive, Haworth. Bring snack and water and wear sturdy footwear. Rain, snow, or extreme cold cancels. Please register on Meetup or contact leader Mary Walsh at blehlwalsh@hotmail.com.

Jan 18 (Mon): Executive and Conservation Committee Meeting. 7pm, location TBD. This is the quarterly meeting of the Executive and Conservation Committees of the North Jersey Group. The meeting is casual and informative. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn more about the Club, hear about and discuss issues, plan future events, and become more active. Please check the on-line calendar of events to confirm. For more information please contact John at jkashwick@gmail.com.

February: Film: The Sacred Place Where Life Begins—Gwich'in Women Speak. Date and location TBD. Please check our online calendar or Meetup page. Women of the Gwich'in nation speak out to protect what they call "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins" from oil development. Also known as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the Gwich'in way of life depends on this sacred land, and the women inspire audience around the country to action).

March: Birds of New Jersey. Date and location TBD. Please check our online calendar or Meetup page. Don Torino of Bergen County Audubon will give his annual presentation on birds, just in time for spring migration season.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!—We are looking for a Programs Chair. The person would be responsible for reaching out to potential speakers, setting up programs and venues for our general meetings in Bergen and Passaic counties throughout the year. No experience necessary but good connections especially in the educational community would be helpful. If interested, please contact John Kashwick at jkashwick@gmail.com or Mary Ellen Shaw at meshaw.001@gmail.com.

CONSERVATION ISSUES:

Pilgrim Pipeline: The proposed Pilgrim Pipeline is a dual 178-mile pipeline between Albany NY and Linden NJ. It will likely contain Bakken shale oil that will be sent south to New Jersey and refined products (including kerosene) will be sent north back to Albany. The pipelines will cross five New Jersey counties (including Bergen and Passaic) through some of the most fragile areas vital to maintaining water quality in all communities. There would be major impact on environment, public health and property values you would bear the burden of having this risk and disruption without any benefit. A spill or explosion could be catastrophic, endangering our water supply, risking lives, and overwhelming our emergency response resources. For more information, please contact Jeff Rapaport at jeffrap@optonline.net.

Oil Trains: Thousands of substandard rail cars are used by CSX to move Bakken crude oil on the West Shore line through Bergen County each year. The threat or danger it poses to our communities demand a moratorium on the use of these substandard rail cars to safeguard our families and communities. The North Jersey Group is joining with other groups to raise awareness of this issue and get the federal government to pass stricter legislation to regulate use of these car. For more information, please contact Mary Ellen Shaw at meshaw.001@gmail.com.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE: We had beautiful weather for our trail maintenance outing on October 10; four of us attacking the Darth Vader of the trails (blueberry bushes). Lily, Ed, Buddy, and this reporter clipped and hacked the bushes for two hours, making a quite noticeable improvement in a terribly overgrown section of a popular trail. We're thinking of applying for a grant from the government as I'm sure our efforts will reduce the nation's healthcare expenditure for the next two years or so—fewer Lyme disease cases to treat! To get on our fast reaction trail maintenance email list send an email to martincohen@verizon.net.

OUTINGS: If you would like to learn how to become an outings leader, lead, please contact Ellen at eblumenkrantz@hotmail.com or Mary Walsh at blehlwalsh@hotmail.com to get more information..

Gateway Group

Serving Hillside, Elizabeth, and Essex County
(except for Livingston, Millburn and Roseland)

The Gateway Group was organized in January 2011. Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment. There are several Gateway Group positions open.

Our website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Gateway/>. (also accessible from the NJ Chapter website) On Facebook: Gateway Group, NJ Sierra or <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782>

OFFICERS:

Chair:	David Yennior	973-844-1384	dyennior@gmail.com
Vice-Chair:	ZaSah Khademi	201-618-8572	zasah@aol.com
Secretary:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Treasurer:	Anne Hirs	973-844-1121	annehirs@msn.com
Program Chair:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Publicity Chair:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Conservation			
Co-Chairs:	ZaSah Khademi	201-618-8572	zasah@aol.com
and	David Korfhage	973-932-0742	drkorfhage@gmail.com
Political Chair:	Anna Whitney		annawhitney44@gmail.com
Fundraising Chair:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Membership			
Chair:	Steven Yafet	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
Water, Newark Issues Chr:			
Recycling Issues Chair:	Bill Chappel	973-623-6490	chappel.bill@gmail.com
Passaic River			
Co-Chairs:	Brenda Toyloy	973-856-7056	brendatoyloy@yahoo.com
and	Jeff Weiss	973-650-1030	bonefish5000@gmail.com
Elizabeth			
Issues Chair:	Paula Borenstein	908-289-3584	brdandmkt@aol.com
Outings Chair:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Group Executive Committee:	David Yennior, ZaSah Khademi and Bill Chappel		

Please contact David Yennior, Gateway's Chair, if you have any ideas or suggestions for a program in the future. The Gateway Group is very grateful for the contributions of John Beadle, Barbara Conover, ZaSah Khademi, Bill Chappel, Steven Yafet, Anne Hirs, Paula Borenstein, and Brenda Toyloy.

The Gateway Group invites YOU to join in the activism and asks your support as we strive to address the many issues facing the urban as well as suburban communities.

Gateway has been involved in the recent Massive Climate March in NYC, stopping more surface parking lots in Newark, banning Fracking Fluids in Elizabeth, cosponsoring a GMO documentary, a proposed development in Verona, a church expansion in Cedar Grove, the Pilgrim Pipeline, Keystone XL Pipeline, Fracking, Newark's Covanta Incinerator, Passaic River Restoration Community Advisory Group, Maplewood Green Day, formerly the West Orange Seton Hall project, the Newark Water Wars, advocating for NJ Sierra endorsed candidates for State and National Offices, and supporting other environmental groups.

There are several vacant positions listed, along with a full list of officers. For further information about upcoming activities, volunteer opportunities, or to discuss any concerns please contact me at dyennior@gmail.com or call 973-844-1384.

LIST OF UPCOMING EVENTS: There are no events currently on the calendar. For up to date information about programs please check the website.

Hudson Area Network
(Hudson County)

The NJ Chapter understands the importance of urban issues such as protecting the public's drinking water and air quality, maintaining good mass transit, issues of flooding, providing access to the waterfront, the creation and preservation of sustainable green open space, and addressing environmental justice issues, and is currently establishing a local network of local grassroots volunteers in the Hudson County area. **Anyone interested in being involved** is encouraged to contact Hudson Area Coordinator Christine Wiltanger: cwiltanger@gmail.com.

(Note: a "Network" is a new Sierra Club entity analogous to a Group, but more informal.)

Loantaka Group

(Morris and Union Counties (except for Elizabeth and Hillside), plus Livingston, Milburn and Roseland, approximately)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>
Loantaka now has a FaceBook page. Please check it out and like it: <https://www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC>

OFFICERS:

Group Co-Chairs:	Eric Hausker	732-669-0719	ericbiomass@gmail.com
and	Paul Sanderson	908-233-2414	paulmsanderson@aol.com
Treasurer:	Paul Sanderson	908-233-2414	paulmsanderson@aol.com
Secretary:	Scott McCarthy	813-767-5593	hi_risescott@earthlink.net
Conservation Chair:			
Morris County:	Len Fariello		len@wildlifepreserves.org
Union County:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Political Chair:	Clea Carchia	908-892-7229	info@CleaCarchia.com
Programs:	Eric Hausker	732-669-0719	ericbiomass@gmail.com
Fundraising Chair:	Eric Hausker	732-669-0719	ericbiomass@gmail.com
Outings Chair:	Wanda Knapik	908-432-2198	AdventuresWithWanda@gmail.com
Publicity Chair:	Wynn Johanson	908-464-0442	johansons@comcast.net
Membership:	Bruce Ostrow	973-625-0792	ostrowb@gmail.com
Webmaster:	Wynn Johanson	908-464-0442	johansons@comcast.net

If you might be interested in getting involved, come to one of our Executive Committee Meetings on the first Tuesday of the month and get to know us. Or come to one of our General Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. There are no obligations and there will be no pressure.

To find out our activities, go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>

To join our e-mailing list, go to: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/nj-loantaka-news.html>

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS: are held on the FIRST TUESDAY of the month at 7:30 pm at Library of the Chathams, 214 Main St, Chatham. All members are wel-

come at Executive Committee meetings. Right now, we have open positions on it! If you would like to find out more, please contact Paul Sanderson.

GENERAL MEETINGS: are held on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of the month at 7:30 pm at the Library of the Chathams, 214 Main St, Chatham. Come learn something new and make some new friends. We'd welcome the chance to meet you and to introduce ourselves. Please see the schedule, below, and join us!

DIRECTIONS: posted on our website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>

MEETING SCHEDULE:

Jan 13: Dr. Daniela Shebitz will talk to us about the disruptions to the Central American ecosystem which will be caused by the construction of a Pacific-Caribbean canal thru Nicaragua.

Feb 10: To be announced. Please check our website for the most current information regarding General Meetings.

Mar 9: No meeting - the library is holding their annual book sale.

ACTIVITIES: (Consult our website (<http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>) for more information.) The Loantaka Group is working with concerned citizens and local environmental organizations to protect open space and wildlife habitat in Morris and Union Counties, and to safeguard the water resources on which we all depend. We are also organizing volunteers to help maintain and improve trails in the Morris and Union County Park Systems. In addition, the Group is actively involved in State-wide initiatives involving air quality, transportation, and environmental legislation. Volunteers are always welcome. Call Paul (908-233-2414) or Eric (732-669-0719).

Central Jersey Group

(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)

Web-site: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey/>. Or click from the NJ Chapter's web-site.

OFFICERS: The Chapter is rebuilding the Central Jersey Group looking for dedicated individuals to address a number of important environmental issues in the area.

ACTIVITIES: The group will work with other grassroots organizations to support efforts to protect the pristine environment and natural beauty of this area. We will work on local environmental issues to preserve open space, promote effective planning, control invasive species, protect wetlands and build trails. Along with the rest of the Sierra Club, we will actively oppose the Transco pipeline in Princeton/Montgomery, natural gas pipelines in New Jersey, fracking and fracking waste disposal in New Jersey, and other environmental issues.

For questions about this Group, including upcoming meetings and how to get involved, please contact Jamie Zaccaria at our Trenton office, at jamie.zaccaria@sierraclub.org, 609-656-7612.

For Central Outings, sign up for the Central distribution list and visit the NJ Sierra Outings webpage, or examine pp. 11-12 of this Newsletter.

Raritan Valley Group

(Middlesex and Somerset Counties and surrounding areas)

OFFICERS:

Group Chair:	Roomi Nusrat	609-389-6036	sierra_nj_raritan@att.net
Group Vice Chair:	<i>Open position!</i>		
Outings			
Coordinator:	<i>Open position!</i>		
Webmaster:	<i>Open position!</i>		
Treasurer:	<i>Open position!</i>		
Recycling			
Coordinator:	<i>Open position!</i>		
Conservation Coor:	Nancy Gladfelter		nnglad.nj@gmail.com
Secretary:	<i>Open position!</i>		
Political Chair:	Daphne Speck-Barynski	732-390-5311	speckbartyn@comcast.net
Membership:	<i>Open position!</i>		

WEBSITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Raritan-Valley/>

Our monthly meetings are usually on a weekday evening of the third week. We have a program with convenient telephone conferences to update the membership on activities. Please write to us on e-mail sierra_nj_rartian@att.net to participate.

Meetings Location and Updates: Because meeting dates and locations change, please subscribe to our E-mail list: NJ-RARITAN-VALLEY-NEWS after creating a password on <http://lists.sierraclub.org/>

Please contribute to our Quarterly News Letter sent via the E-mail list. On our home page, please click on the link: Submit Issues, Events or other News from your Township. The due dates are 15th of February, May, August and October.

The issues of interest to our communities include but are not limited to:

The issues of interest to our communities include but are not limited to:

1. Conservation and Protection of the Raritan River basin area.
Key issues: preservation of our water supply, wildlife and prevention of water pollution.

2. Passage of and responsible enforcement of environmentally friendly zoning and development ordinances.

3. Prevention of diversion of conserved land for commercial or other development. We are for preservation of open space and preventing diversion of land from State's Green Acres program to commercial development are our goals.

GROUP NEWS

(Continued from page 7)

We encourage you to attend your town's planning/zoning board or land use board meetings. If you are aware of development proposals in your town that may have a negative environmental impact, PLEASE communicate concerns by attending our meetings and by contacting us via sierra_nj_rartian@att.net.

Jersey Shore Group

(Monmouth County, approximately)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/>

OFFICERS:

Group Chair:	Dennis Anderson	732-970-4327	dennisaza@aol.com
	6 Maple Ave, Matawan NJ 07747		
Vice-Chair:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Secretary:	Joe DeLuca	732-389-1835	joe-deluca@att.net
Conservation Chair:	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
Webmaster:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Treasurer:	Pat Fuschetto	732-308-4588	fusche40@yahoo.com
Political Chair:	Bob Sandberg	732-747-3224	sandberg00@gmail.com
Outings Chair:	Mike Verange	908-902-0718	mjverange@aol.com
Membership Chair:	Bob Grize	732-892-0684	nyucwnyppb@aol.com
Program Chair:	George Moffatt	732-544-1726	gmoffattgt@aol.com
Fund-raising Co-Chairs:	Lois Blake	732-863-5917	lqblake@optonline.net
and	Joellen Lundy	732-741-4756	jfutey@comcast.net

Jersey Shore Group Happenings:

The Whale Pond Brook Watershed Association, which includes our Jersey Shore Group, has received a grant from the Stony Brook Watershed Institute for five seminars to educate local students and residents about the Whale Pond Brook Watershed. We will also build a demonstration rain garden near a local public swim club in Ocean Township. Our Group is looking for volunteers to help implement this grant.

Five municipalities surrounding the Whale Pond Brook watershed (Tinton Falls, Ocean Township, Eatontown, West Long Branch and Long Branch) have signed the Watershed Association's formal resolution to help restore the banks of the brook and its water quality. Since many neighbors in this watershed are not aware of the opportunities to be stewards of their watershed land, the Watershed Association will hold informational workshops to explain:

- how impervious cover (roofs, lawns, parking lots, streets) cause flooding;
- how rain gardens can help improve water quality and reduce flooding; and
- the need to create and maintain rain gardens on both private and public lands.

Our goals include:

- Restoring the eroded banks and water quality in the Whale Pond Brook Watershed and to create a greenway from Eatontown, the brook's source, to the ocean at Long Branch.
- Educating our neighbors so that we incorporate responsible environmental practices into everyday actions we take on our properties.
- Creating rain gardens throughout the watershed, including the rain garden that will be funded by Ocean Township. This garden will serve as a model to increase community awareness of practices that positively affect both the health and the beauty of our watershed environment, and, in turn, promote public participation in future watershed projects.

To the right, Faith Teitelbaum (center), co-chair of the Whale Pond Brook Watershed Association, and four volunteers work on the brookside path that will soon extend from Eatontown to Long Branch. We will need help in the spring to plant the rain garden. If you can help, please contact Faith Teitelbaum, Jersey Shore Group Conservation Chair, at 732-513-5445.



Help Needed for Other Cleanups:

If you would like to participate in cleanups of our other local waterways, please contact another dynamo, Laura Bagwell at l.bagwell3@verizon.net. Laura focuses on the Red Bank area watersheds. In this effort, we work with the Navesink Swimming River Group which, since 2002, has removed more than 20 tons of debris from our local banks and streams. Alas, pollution never ends; we are in constant need of volunteers.

GENERAL MEETINGS: Our general membership meetings take place at 6pm on the fourth Monday of the month at Brookdale Community College's Lincroft Campus. We are delighted that the college has invited us to continue the joint meetings of Sierra members, BCC students and the public through 2016. Our meetings, billed by BCC as "Science Monday," average 75 attendees a month, with some talks peaking at 120 to 150 people. The cooperative effort between Sierra and BCC extends the "reach" of both organizations into the Monmouth community. Our BCC liaison is Dr. Patricia Dillon, biology professor in the college's Science Department.

We meet at BCC to share our speakers with environmentally-concerned BCC college students, the general public, and other environmental organizations. A buffet is available for the students and adults at 6pm. The programs start at 6:30 pm.

To get to Brookdale, take GSP Exit 109 to Rte 520 West (Newman Springs Rd, which becomes E Main St at the Lincroft campus). Exit the traffic circle into the campus and follow the signs to the Warner Student Life Center (SLC), where the meeting usually is in the Twin Lights Rooms I and II. Use parking lot 7. As you walk towards the building complex, Warner will be down the slope on your left. If lot 7 is full, use parking lots 5 or 6. A campus map is at http://www.brookdalecc.edu/PDFFiles/MAPS/MAP_04_08.pdf.

Jan 25: Climate Challenges to Polar Bears and, Yes, Sharks – Dave Grant, former director of the Brookdale Community College's Ocean Institute marine field programs and

science instructor at BCC, will explore how some marine creatures – from sharks to polar bears – will be affected by global warming. Problems include rising ocean temperatures and drops in ocean salinity that could alter both warmer surface currents and colder deep sea currents. His observations are based on NOAA research expeditions for science teachers that he has participated in for the past few years.

Feb 22: Fracking Problems in NJ – Rita Yelda of Food & Water Watch will talk about the impacts fracking will have on NJ. While no actual fracking is occurring in NJ, since we don't have oil shale formations in the state, the emergence of environmental threats from oil trains, waste water treatment, and pipeline construction through protected open lands make such a discussion very timely. NJ is contributing to the fracking problem because natural gas consumption in the state has dramatically increased in the last few years as consumers shift from oil.

Mar 28: Teaching the Teachers – Claire Antonucci, Executive Director and Director of Education at the NJ Sea Grant Consortium, Sandy Hook, will discuss one aspect of the Consortium's wide-ranging educational programs, developing classroom curricula to help grammar and high school teachers to explain in their science courses – such as biology, botany, and earth sciences – how the growing threats of global warming and the increased temperatures and greenhouse gasses could affect not only the marine and terrestrial environments, but even the food chain/matrix that supports today's homo sapiens (that is, us). The Consortium's mission is to "promote the wise use of New Jersey's marine and coastal resources through research, education and outreach."

Ocean County Group

WEBSITE: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ocean-county/

OFFICERS:

Chair & Treasurer:	A. Gregory Auriemma, Esq.	732-451-9220	sierraclubOC@aol.com
Vice-Chair & Conserv Chair:	Margit Meissner-Jackson	609-296-4367	sylviaJ1910@yahoo.com
Outings Chair & Env'l Ed'n Coord:	Terrance Brown	848-333-7331	
Outings Co-Chair:	Monica Zabroski	609-384-2693	monicazabrowski@yahoo.com
Fund-Raising:	Joyce M. Isaza	732-920-9270	realtymstr@aol.com
Group ExCom Member:	Nancy Brown	732-892-6089	nancybrown624@comcast.net
Group ExCom Member:	Sierra Palmer		

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS: Generally held on the SECOND MONDAY of each month at the Ocean County Library.

ACTIVITIES & ISSUES: We're hard at work: Preventing drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and off the Jersey Coast, defending the Endangered Species Act, fighting Mountain Top Removal and supporting expanded recycling legislation.

We've also targeted critical local open space, sprawl, and air and water quality issues with special emphasis on the massive "over-development" of Jackson Township and Lakewood. We're also involved in the campaigns to create a new park at "Anchor Reef" on Barnegat Bay and to stop "nitrogen pollution" of the Bay. Protecting the Ocean County Hiking Trail in Lacey. We're watching the progress of the first Wind Turbine erected in the County which resides in Ocean Gate. We're also involved in creating a greener and sustainable environment in Ocean County.

Volunteers are needed to help with these all issues, membership outreach, tabling at local events, fund-raising and a computer-based voter education program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about our activities and events, please visit our web site: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ocean-county/>

MEETINGS AND EVENTS: General Meetings are held bi-monthly (i.e., in alternate months) usually on the FOURTH MONDAY at 7pm at the "Skywalk Cafe" in the Ocean County Administration Building, 129 Hooper Avenue (2nd Floor), Toms River. Information on meetings in July-September will be posted on the website.

West Jersey Group

(Camden, Gloucester and Burlington Counties, approximately)

WEBSITE: <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/West-Jersey/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC> Log on and Like Us

Follow us on Twitter @WJsierraclub and Instagram @wjsierraclub

OFFICERS:

Group Chair:	Gina Carola	856-848-8831	ginaceee@verizon.net
Vice-Chair:	Frank Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Secretary:	Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Treasurer:	Trish Clements		patri3210@gmail.com
Publicity Chair:	Anne Caridi		bears4cats@msn.com
Political Chair:	Linda Rubiano		Linda_Maritza@yahoo.com
Pinelands Rep:	Lee Snyder		pinelands1@hotmail.com
Greenways Coord's:	Frank and Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Conservation Chair:	Stacey Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Delegate at Large:	Aida Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Membership Chair:	Mike Brown	856-547-9221	eyebrown@verizon.net
Fundraising Chair:	<i>Open position!</i> Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831		
Smart Growth Chair:	<i>Open position!</i> Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831		
Programs Chair:	<i>Open position!</i> Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831		
Outings Chair:	<i>Open position!</i> Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831		
Social Media Coord's:	Evan Kostka		evan.kostka@gmail.com
and	Dayna Hovern		dayna.hovern@gmail.com

GENERAL MEETINGS: are held at 7:30 pm on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of each month, September thru May, at the Quaker Meeting Hall on Friends Ave in Haddonfield. Inclement weather may cancel. Please call 856-848-8831 if unsure.

Directions: From I-295, take exit 34B onto Rte 70 West. Follow the signs for Rte 41 South, which is Kings Hwy (you will have to exit to the right into a jug handle and then turn left onto Rte 41 (Kings Hwy). Cross over Rte 70 and you will be briefly on Rte 154 (Brace Rd). Make the next right and then the next left onto Kings Hwy. After about 1 mile, you will cross Grove Rd (Indian King Tavern is on the right corner). After crossing Grove Rd, go two more blocks and turn right on to Friends Ave. Go one block to the Meeting House. Park in the lot next to the Meeting House and enter the auditorium through the doors on the right side of the building. Do not go into the Meeting House.

Jan 13: Healthy Eating in a Junk-filled World - Label to Table. Navigating the Landscape. Presented by Barbara Thomas and Keith Monahan of GMO-Free New Jersey.

Feb 10: Movie Night. "Tapped." Is access to clean water a basic human right? Or a commodity that should be bought and sold like any other article of commerce? A behind the scenes look into the unregulated bottled water industry and the communities impacted along with the environmental degradation caused by discarded water bottles.

Mar 9: Growing Communities Through Growing Food - Dean Buttacavoli of the Center for Environmental Transformation will speak about an urban farm located in Camden, NJ that engages and educates people of all backgrounds to practice a more environmentally responsible way of living on the planet.

HAPPENINGS:

At the November General Meeting of the West Jersey Group, members brought non-perishable food to donate to the Food Bank of South Jersey to help with their Thanksgiving Food Drive. Photograph below.



South Jersey Group

(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem Counties, approximately)

OFFICERS:

Group, Outings Chair: Tom Boghosian 609-625-0878 boghosian1@verizon.net
Vice-Chair: *Open Position!*
Conservation Chair: *Open Position!*
Pol. Chair, Calendars: Dick Colby 609-965-4453 dick.colby@stockton.edu
Membership Chair: *Open Position!*
Secretary/Treasurer: Julie Akers 609-432-3280 julieakers56@gmail.com

The central conservation issue, for which the South Jersey Group was founded in the 1970s, continues to be protection of the Great Egg Harbor Wild & Scenic River, and continues to consume the energies of those few officers who remain active both within the Sierra Club and in the Watershed Association (GEHWA) that spun off from the South Jersey Group. Very few of our local members seem interested in the meetings we once scheduled (monthly, until 2005). For now, we'll continue to be listed in this Newsletter, and offer a point of contact for Club members in South Jersey who want help with local issues. We strongly recommend GEHWA's website for keeping up with local issues, and for links to many other local, regional, state and national environmental organizations: www.gehwa.org . If you have topics (and places) for meetings, please let the officers know about them. We welcome general comments from Club members in South Jersey. To be placed on a carefully guarded distribution list for local issues and meetings, please e-mail dick.colby@stockton.edu. Dick is also an Atlantic County Parks Commissioner; contact him if you might be interested in attending monthly meetings of the Commission, which are open to the public (although we don't meet in July and August).

Current Issues: (1) A land-use controversy in Millville - over what is known as the Durand Tract, seems to be back in controversy, with a court requiring reconsideration. Jeff Tittel is probably the most knowledgeable person in the Chapter. (2) Controversy continues over the construction of a large-diameter (24") natural gas pipeline to feed the BL England electric power plant in Marmora (Cape May Co), with a likely lawsuit originating from the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. (3) Veronica Van Hof has been hired as director of the Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, which straddles Atlantic and Gloucester Counties on Unexpected Road. She holds a degree in wildlife biology. You can reach her through the Refuge telephone: 856.697.3541 - or by e-mail: director@unexpectedwildliferefuge.org. (4 etc.) Campaigns to prevent the use of tropical rain-forest wood for rebuilding oceanfront boardwalks, in Ocean City and Wildwood, seem quiescent at present. Club officers and staff have been following several studies seeking to determine sustainable water supply levels for southeastern New Jersey, with the hope that findings will be used by planners (such as those employed by the Pinelands Commission) who permit development. On damage being done to sand trails by ORVs in Wharton State Forest, the DEP has sided with the vehicle enthusiasts by rejecting a Motorized Access Map prepared by the Park staff. The next move will be the DEP's.

Some Possibly Relevant Meetings of Allied Organizations:

Jan 6, Feb 3 and Mar 2 (first Wednesdays), 6:30pm: Atlantic County Friends of the Parks: Monthly meetings of Friends of the Parks, a group which works to improve and promote the Atlantic County Park System. All are welcome. Warren Fox Nature Center (WFNC*), Atlantic County Park in Estell Manor, Milepost 15 on NJ Rte 50, 3½ miles south of Mays Landing. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280.

Jan 26 and Mar 22 (alternate fourth Tuesdays) 6:30pm: Great Egg Harbor River Watershed Association: Membership meeting, open to the public. WFNC*, Contact Lynn Maun, 856-649-2792 or email lynnkmaun@comcast.net.

Jan 27, Feb 24 and Mar 23 (fourth Wednesdays), 7pm: Atlantic Audubon Society is a lively member-organization with strong environmental programs and an excellent monthly on-line newsletter. Membership is free. Meetings are in the Galloway Twp Library, 306 E Jimmie Leeds Rd. www.AtlanticAudubon.org.

Feb 10 (alternate second Wednesdays), 7pm: Bi-monthly meeting of Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries (another "Partnership River" under federal protection): Meeting place: George Luciano Center, Cumberland County College. Cumberland County development issues are commonly discussed, including art, historical and recreational attributes of the area. Contact Karla Rossini (CU) at 609-774-5853 or karla.rossini@cumauriceriver.org. Website: www.cumauriceriver.org.

Feb 17 (alternate third Wednesdays), 6:30pm: Great Egg Harbor Scenic and Recreational River Council: Representatives of the 12 municipalities discuss river management strategies. Open to the public. WFNC*. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280.

Singles Section

(A chapter-wide, special interest section offering hikes/cleanups, social gatherings, meetings, etc.)

Please join us! The NJ Singles Section was specifically created to offer a variety of singles-oriented activities to NJ Sierra Club members and those who would like to know more about us. We are not a local group; we are a statewide additional "layer" of Club involvement. Everyone is welcome to attend our events. Come out and meet fellow Club members and others who care about the environment. We can only offer as many activities as we have volunteers to run them - if you have the slightest urge to get involved, please contact one of our officers!

WEBSITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Sierra-Singles/>

The BEST way to be notified of upcoming events is to join our free listserv. Anyone may subscribe by going to: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/NJ-SINGLES-NEWS.html> and clicking on "Join or leave the list." You may subscribe and unsubscribe at will; directions on how to unsubscribe are at the bottom of each announcement. We recommend joining the listserv to receive announcements for all of our events a few weeks before each event. Events are also listed on the online calendar on the Chapter's web site: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/.

You can now also "like" us on Facebook: "Singles Group New Jersey Sierra Club".

OFFICERS:

Interim Chair:	Ron Pate	ronpate31@verizon.net
Outings Chair:	Joyce Haddad	jkhaddad@juno.com
Conservation Chair:	<i>Position Open.</i> Contact us!	We need you!
Treasurer:	Joyce White	joyce.white.exec@gmail.com
Social Chair:	Joe Prebish	Joe.Prebish@kraft.com
Vice Social Chair:	Jeff Sovelove	Hiker_Dood@yahoo.com
Programs:	<i>Position Open.</i> Contact us!	We need you!
Publicity:	<i>Position Open.</i> Contact us!	We need you!
Membership:	<i>Position Open.</i> Contact us!	We need you!
Nominations:	Nancy Sullivan	nancysullivan@comcast.net

2015 Executive Committee members: Rozanna Fonelli, Joyce Haddad, Ron Pate, Joe Prebish, Jeff Sovelove, Daphne Speck Bartynski, Joyce White.

Volunteer Opportunities: We need volunteers in all areas of the state to run events. Volunteers needed as hike leaders, Fundraising Chair/Co-Chairs, and members of all committees, including planning social events and conservation activities. Please attend an executive committee meeting or email any of the officers if you are interested. You may co-chair any position with a friend, if desired. We're happy to help you learn the ropes.

GENERAL MEETINGS: Casual pizza gathering, introduction to club issues and activities, speakers, and letter-writing at the Chatham Library. Dates and topics will be announced on our listserv; see above for subscription information.

ExCom MEETINGS take place once a month at various locations. All welcome. Contact any officer for location.

SOCIAL DINNER: THIRD TUESDAY of each month at 7pm. Join us for dinner at a variety of Montclair restaurants. Location will be announced 2 weeks before each social. RSVP is required as described in the announcement.

SOCIAL DINNERS with MOVIE SHOWINGS are scheduled approximately monthly in New Brunswick. Join us for thought-provoking films and conversation over casual dinners. Topics and locations will be announced on our listserv and on the Chapter's online calendar (see above).

HIKES AND OTHER OUTINGS:

The Singles Section sponsors many outings, ranging from beginners' level to advanced difficulty. Some of these are listed in this newsletter; others are announced only on our listserv and the Chapter's online calendar. See the Outings section of this Newsletter for singles outings led by Jimi Oleksiak and Jeff Sovelove. Please join the listserv to receive notification of all of our outings (see above for instructions on how to subscribe).

Sierra Silver Singles is a subgroup that organizes hikes and other social events to appeal to Singles over 50. Most events are scheduled followed by an optional meal at a location determined by the leader. See the Outings section of this Newsletter for Silver Singles outings. Check the Singles listserv for announcements of more Silver Singles outings.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Section

The mission of this Section is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote activism within the LGBT community through letter writing, phone calls, and other active support for environmental issues. All members and non-members are welcome to join our outings regardless of sexual orientation.

(continued on page 10)

Become active in one of your Group's conservation campaigns! Attend a Group meeting! Meetings offer interesting speakers and topics, nice fellow-members, and usually food!

GROUP NEWS

(Continued from page 9)

WEB SITE: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/>

MEETUP: <http://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt>

OFFICERS:

Co-Chair:	John Kashwick *	jkashwick@gmail.com
Co-Chair:	Robert Zitzman *	robertmz@att.net
Secretary:	Jonathan Wall*	psychologist@jonwall.com
Treasurer:	Corbett Klein *	corbettklein@outlook.com
Outings Co-Chair:	Corbett Klein *	corbettklein@outlook.com
Outings Co-Chair:	Robert Zitzman *	robertmz@att.net
Webmaster/		
Listmaster:	John Kashwick *	jkashwick@gmail.com
Ex-Com Member:	OPEN POSITION—contact John or Robert if interested	

(* Section Executive Committee Member)

MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

Dates and times subject to change. Participants should register for outings at http://newjersey.sierraclub.org/nj_calendar.asp or www.meetup.com/njsierraclub. Please contact leader for more information. You can also receive updated information by joining our email list. Please contact John at jkashwick@gmail.com to be included in the list.

Jan 23 (Sat): Thomas Edison National Historic Site. West Orange. We'll visit the laboratory and home of inventor Thomas Edison on a ranger guided tour. We'll meet at the visitor center to purchase tickets by 10:30 planning to attend the 11am tour. Severe weather may cancel—call or text leader if in doubt. Please register on Meetup.com. Leaders: Jonathan Wall: psychologist@jonwall.com and 908-295-1890, and John Kashwick: 201-294-1092 and jkashwick@gmail.com.

Feb 3 (Wed): Executive Committee Conference Call. 7:30pm. Help plan events for the spring months and discuss administrative issues. Contact John for dial-in number or more information at jkashwick@gmail.com.

Mar 19 (Sat): Whitesbog Moonlight Walk. Pemberton Township. Walk is approximately 3-5 miles in length and led by their own guides. We'll arrive early enough to tour the village and have some food before our 6:30 walk. Cost: \$5. Leader: Robert Zitzman: RobertMZ@att.net and 908-723-3633. Rain or other severe weather cancels. Contact leader if in doubt.

Volunteers Needed! We are continuing to recruit volunteers and outings leaders. For more information, please email John at jkashwick@gmail.com or Robert at robertmz@att.net.

Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section

(A chapter-wide special interest section which offers a weekly to monthly calendar of activities and events, including hikes, clean ups, social gatherings, dinner get-togethers and other functions intended for those members over fifty)

More New Jersey events are posted on our web site: <http://www.funtravels.com>. In addition, a monthly Buy & Sell newsletter is sent out to members free of charge, in which they can list items they are searching for or want to buy.

The mission of this section is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote activism through letter writing, phone calls, and other active support for environmental issues.

We work through a "List Serve," by which members learn about current environmental issues, and how they can be supported.

Arline Zatz is the editor of the Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section. She can be reached at azatz@funtravels.com, and invites members to check her web site at www.funtravels.com for trips, tips, and travel information regarding New Jersey and other states.

Sierra Student Coalition

(a semi-autonomous organization of college and high-school students)

National Website: <http://www.ssc.org/>

Interesting Children in the Outdoors Section

(another Chapter-wide special interest activity with the motto: No Child Left Inside!)

OFFICERS:

Chair: Marty Cohen 201-670-8383 martincohen@verizon.net

ICO is a public service program of the Sierra Club consisting of 50 groups nationwide, who hold over 1,000 nature outings per year, oriented towards children. NJICO currently schedules about 5 such outings per year.

We continue to lead hikes for the Hoboken H.S. Sierra Club, and we are pursuing outing opportunities with other youth service agencies. We are pleased to announce that one of our volunteers, Erin Long, has just completed her leadership certification requirements, but we still have a need for steering committee members and for additional hike leaders. Accordingly, if you are an experienced hiker willing to commit to leading two hikes per year, or if you have no experience but are willing to commit to attending three steering committee meetings per year, and performing some additional assignments totaling 20 hours per year, please contact the Chair. The operative word here is "commit".

WEBMASTER NEEDED URGENTLY

To maintain the Chapter's Website. Contact Rich Isaac (risaacx@aol.com)

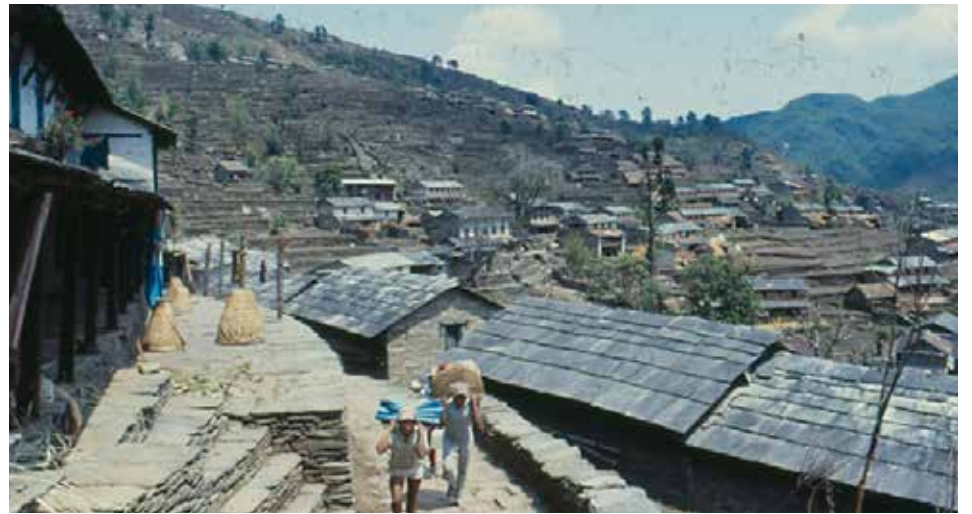
On the Trail

Trekking in Nepal

By Dick Colby

There are three ways to wander through the foothills of the Himalayas. You can pay for an organized package tour complete with porters and Sherpa guides. Or you can hire your own guide when you arrive at the villages where Nepal's extensive network of mountain

trails begin. Or you can do what I did in April of 1983: I started walking, alone with my backpack, northwest from Pokhara, through a Tibetan refugee camp and up onto the steep ridges that comprise the southern portion of the Annapurna Circuit - one of the planet's



The route cuts through many villages such as this one, Lumle



Standing back from an express delivery caravan



Note the terraces for crops associated with the village of Naudanda

most spectacular treks.

I came prepared. Five of my colleagues at Stockton College had been there. The Map Store in Washington DC had sold me the detailed trekking maps. And Hugh Swift's "Trekker's Guide to the Himalayas," published by the Sierra Club, explained the visas and permits needed, how to get there inexpensively, health precautions to take, where to eat and stay en route, and even enough of the local languages to get by.

Stone-paved footpaths are the only possible means of traveling through Nepal's "Middle Hills," ranging from 5000 to 15,000 feet in elevation, and extending the entire length of the Tennessee-shaped country. There are villages every few miles, surrounded by steeply terraced hillsides where crops are grown, each with at least one stone home signposted in English as a Trekker's Lodge, and offering tea and chipatis, and more elaborate food, as well as a straw pallet for your sleeping bag - for the equivalent of 12¢ per night. I was often accosted by

children wanting to practice their English, as preparation for serving as porters to expeditions of all sizes.

The Annapurna cluster of summits was often in spectacular sight to the north; they range from 23,000 to more than 26,000 feet above sea-level. The entire circuit takes three-to-four-weeks, and includes a high pass at 17,700 feet. I had time only for the 25-mile southern portion, that featured a view down into the spectacular north-south Kali-Gandaki River Valley, which separates the Annapurna cluster from the Dhaulagiri Range to the west. I often encountered the equivalent of FedEx vans: caravans of pack animals, brightly adorned and musically attuned with strings of bells. (I had been advised to carry always a large black umbrella: to protect against rain and sun, to gently fend off dogs and pack animals, and to use as a third arm and leg!)

I very much enjoyed the feeling of being back in the Middle Ages - beyond the reach of electricity and plumbing.

Cooking and heating were by woodstoves. In the homes where I stayed, evenings were devoted to family gatherings around a dim candle- or lantern-lit table, exchanging stories, singing, and playing family games. Instead of toilets there were sections of hillside, sloping down from each town, where one stooped, and where I then burned the toilet paper I had used.

Surprisingly, even these remote stone trailside villages have acquired many aspects of a modern economy. All had elaborate community water taps for cooking water and for washing. Many had schools and banks. English is widely spoken. And there are shops selling a variety of manufactured dry-goods and hardware, delivered by those mule and donkey caravans, or by large baskets carried on people's backs, the weight suspended by forehead straps.

As I trekked westward I became aware of a changing weather pattern. The mornings had previously been perfectly clear

and cool at my elevations (5000 to 10,000 feet) warming by midday to perfect sleeveless comfort. But clouds began to appear by afternoon, becoming thicker every day. I was intruding on the onset of the annual summer monsoon season. Finally there came a morning of heavy mist and light rain, and it was time for me to retrace my steps. My view was now limited to mist-shrouded, terraced fields: fully as satisfying aesthetically as the more distant vistas of previous days. On my last day of winding descent into Pokhara I was joined by an adventurous woman from Montréal, completing a solo circuit of Annapurna. We shared mixed emotions as we approached the end of the trail, and could see and hear ahead of us the cars, radios and other gadgets that most people in our countries regard as necessities.

But I'll admit it was comforting to take a warm shower again, and to linger in Pokhara's Cuckoo Restaurant over pie and an endless pot of tea.



Looking down into the Kali-Gandacki valley from Chandrakot. Note the mountainsides denuded of forest and the smoke from home fires.



Outings Learn more about your environment... take a Sierra Club educational hike!

GROUP OUTINGS COORDINATORS
(roughly north to south)

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- Chapter Outings Chair:** Ellen Blumenkrantz
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Outing Leaders: Please send April-June 2016 write-ups to your Group Outings Coordinator (or, if you don't associate yourself with a single Group, directly to Ellen Blumenkrantz, the Chapter Outings Chair) before Feb. 5. If you are planning to lead an outing close to the beginning of one of our quarterly publication periods, please submit it for the previous Sierran, due to the occasional lag in mailing. Also, please send outing rosters or sign-up sheets to the Chapter Office as soon as possible after each outing.

Note: Group Outings Coordinators: Please submit your April-June 2016 trip write-ups by Feb. 8.

NOTES ON OUTINGS: All Outings are open to Club members, guests and anyone interested in outings. Unless otherwise specified, the events are free and open to the public. ALL participants must sign liability waivers on ALL outings sponsored by the Sierra Club. Please check with the leader before bringing small children on an outing. A parent

or other responsible adult must accompany persons under 18. At their discretion, leaders may permit pets on outings if the event description specifically includes bringing pets.

Sierra Club outings are arranged by volunteer leaders who are in charge of the trip and responsible for the safety, welfare and enjoyment of all participants. Leaders determine qualifications to participate, adequacy of equipment, routes to be followed, and special precautions to be taken. Please arrive adequately prepared and equipped. If you have any allergies, please remember to bring your medication. The leader has the final word in the conduct of the trip. Your cooperation will help assure a safe and pleasant outing.

Please arrive early at the meeting place so that the outing can start on time. For day hikes, lunch, water (at least a liter), extra clothing, rain gear, and emergency equipment should be carried in a small daypack. For all except easy hikes, sturdy over-the-ankle shoes or boots should be worn. For most trips, you are expected to have your own equipment. In some cases, it may be rented from outdoor/camping suppliers - check the yellow pages or call the trip leader. If the weather is questionable on the date of the outing, you may assume that it will take place, unless the schedule indicates otherwise.

Unless registration is required, such as for weekend trips or river tours, or if you have a question about the outing, it is not necessary to contact the leader before the trip. However, as these outings are planned many months in advance, we do advise that you contact the trip leader 1-2 days before the outing to make sure it is not cancelled. Do not call to join a trip after the posted deadline date. When phoning a leader, please honor his or her requested calling times and call 3 to 5 days before the outing. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) when writing to a leader. On popular trips, Sierra Club members will be given preference.

Watercraft trips let you experience the unspoiled parts of our region, but water safety does impose special requirements. The size and skill of each party must be appropriate to each river, so participation in each trip must be at the discretion of the leader. We ask you to register at least one week in advance. Unless a phone number is provided, please send a SASE with an honest assessment of your paddling experience, whether you need or can offer a ride, your phone number, and any questions you may have. You will receive a description of the trip, with directions, where you can rent a canoe, and what you will need to bring. Almost all trips can arrange partners to share a canoe if you are coming by yourself. Unless stated otherwise: rental canoes are available, trips do not require advanced paddling skill or exceptional physical conditioning,

public transportation is not available, non-members may participate, and responsible smokers are welcome.

If you are a Sierra Club member interested in becoming an Outing Leader or have suggestions for new outings, contact your Group Outings Chair or the Chapter Outings Chair for assistance and further information. The Sierra Group contributing each outing is given at the end of the write-up, as follows:

- (C) - Central Jersey
- (G) - Gateway
- (N) - North Jersey
- (RV) - Raritan Valley
- (W) - West Jersey
- (RT) - River Touring Chapter
- (SNG) - Especially for Singles (but ALL welcome)
- (JS) - Jersey Shore
- (L) - Loantaka
- (Sk) - Skylands
- (S) - South Jersey
- (NJ) - NJ Chapter
- (ACOC) - Atlantic

JANUARY

Jan 1 (Fri): New Year's Day Paddle on the Oswego River (Burlington Co). 10am. Ring in the New Year with the NJ Sierra Club. Meet at Lake Oswego and paddle 8 miles on the "Jewel of the Pinelands". Enjoy a tailgate get together after the trip at Harrisville Lake. Bring something to share. Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation. Experienced winter Pines paddlers only. George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Jan 3 (Sun): Veterans Park (Mercer Co). 10am. 4-5 miles, easy pace. Enjoy a winter hike in one of our favorite parks. This 333 acre park was built in honor of Hamilton Township's veterans in 1977. The park is now the home for an F-4 Phantom Jet which honors Veterans who have served in the US Air Force and Armed Forces. Meet at the Kuser Rd entrance. Leashed dogs are welcome. Option for late lunch at Matoris Diner. Inclement weather cancels. George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Jan 9 (Sat): The Great Swamp Hike, Basking Ridge (Somerset Co). 10am. http://www.fws.gov/refuge/great_swamp/ 5 miles in 4 hours on level terrain. Facilities: There is a visitor's center with restrooms. No pets. Hiking boots and a day-pack with water and lunch required. Winter Traction devices are required if there is ice or snow on the ground. Registration required via email. Directions for the meeting place will be sent via e-mail to members who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak: <The_Hikist@mac.com>

Jan 10 (Sun): D&R Canal Hike (Burlington Co). 10am. 5 miles, easy pace. We'll hike over the Lock 1 "swinging bridge" as we walk along the towpath; perhaps see the resident Bald Eagles. Meet at the RiverLINE parking lot in Bordentown City. Option for late lunch at Heart of Bordentown (HOB) Tavern. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather cancels. Leaders: Leona and George F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Jan 15 (Fri): Hike at the NJAS Plainsboro Preserve (Middlesex Co). 10am. 4 miles, easy pace. The Preserve has wildlife exhibits, a reference library and the Nature Store is a great source for field guides, optics, etc. Bring water and snacks. Meet at the Nature Center, 80 Scotts Corner Rd, Cranbury. Directions: www.njaudubon.org/Centers/Plainsboro/. Option for late lunch at Romeo's Restaurant. Inclement weather cancels. Dogs are not permitted. Inclement weather cancels. Leaders: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Jan 16 (Sat): Jockey Hollow National Park (Morris Co). 10am. 6 mile hike. Leader's choice of trails depending on conditions at Jockey Hollow National Park in Morristown. See <http://www.nps.gov/morr/planyourvisit/directions.htm> for directions and information. Bring lots of water, lunch, and wear hiking boots. Meet at the Visitors' Center. Inclement weather cancels. Proper footwear required (sabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions. Optional lunch at a local eatery if we get done in time. No pets please. Leader: Jeffrey Sovelove: Hiker_Dood@yahoo.com. Joint ADK/Sierra Club hike.

Jan 17 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak Trip on the D&R Canal (Mercer Co). 10am. Let's get some winter exercise - paddle 12 miles from Cherry Tree Lane to Kingston. Bring lunch and beverage. Experienced winter paddlers only. Contact leaders to confirm participation. George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Jan 27 (Wed): Hike the Franklin Parker Preserve (Burlington Co). 10am. 5-6 miles, easy pace on the Yellow Trail. The acquisition of the Franklin Parker Preserve in 2003 by the New Jersey Conservation Foundation was a momentous occasion in conservation. This 9400-acre preserve is a keystone piece of land, linking the expanses of Brendan Byrne, Wharton, and Penn State Forests and creating a more contiguous Pinelands National Reserve. Meet at Speedwell entrance off Rte 563, Woodland Twp. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring lunch and water. Rain cancels. George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Jan 31 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak Wading River (Burlington Co). 10am. It's almost Groundhog Day - maybe "Piney Phil" will show up with an early decision about Spring! The river section we paddle will depend on weather conditions. Experienced winter Pines paddlers only. Contact leaders to confirm trip. George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

FEBRUARY

Feb 6 (Sat): Patriots Path Stroll (Morris Co). 10am. Come take an easy stroll on Patriots Path in Morristown. This 3-5 mile stroll will start out from the Speedwell Lake parking lot, across the street from Historic Speedwell. See the Morris County Parks website (<http://www.morrisparks.org>) for directions. The path is wide, partly paved, partly crushed stabilized gravel with very little in the way of elevation gains. We will be strolling at a very moderate pace. Please bring plenty of water and a light snack. Great for beginners. No pets please. Inclement weather cancels. Proper footwear required (sabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions. Optional lunch afterwards. Leader: Jeffrey Sovelove Hiker_Dood@yahoo.com. Joint ADK/Sierra Club hike.

Feb 6 (Sat): Whitesbog Village Winter Hike (Burlington Co). 10am. 4-5 miles. Easy pace. Whitesbog is a NJ historic site and was a village built to house workers in the local cranberry bogs. Perhaps we'll see wintering Tundra Swans as we hike around the bogs. Optional guided tour of the Village at 1pm (small fee). Directions: www.whitesbog.org. Bring beverage and lunch. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather cancels. Leaders: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Feb 13 (Sat): High Point State Park Cross Country Ski (Sussex Co). 10am. <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/highpoint.html>. There is a full service cross country ski center at the park with rentals and a ski lodge. <http://www.xcskihighpoint.com/>. We expect to take 4-5 hours for fun in the snow. Email the leader for the up-to-the-minute details. Facilities: There is a ski lodge with rentals and restrooms. No pets. XC skis and boots and a day-pack with water required. Bring a lunch. Registration required via email. Directions for the meeting place will be sent via email to members who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak: <The_Hikist@mac.com>.

Feb 14 (Sun): A Sweet Hike on Valentine's Day (Burlington Co). 10am. 4-5 miles, easy pace at Historic Smithville Park in Vincentown. The Park features a diverse collection of habitats and terrain and also offers vistas of Rancocas Creek. Meet at the Smith's Woods access parking lot, East Railroad Av. Option for lunch at Vincentown Diner after the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome. Leaders: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Feb 21 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak the Oswego River (Burlington Co). 10am. Meet at Lake Oswego and paddle 8 miles on the "Jewel of the Pinelands". Experienced winter Pines paddlers only. Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Feb 26 (Wed): Clayton Park Hike (Monmouth Co). 10am. 4-5 miles, easy pace on woods trails with some elevation. This rustic 421-acre site in Central New Jersey is located amidst the rolling farmland of western Monmouth County. For directions: www.monmouthcountyparks.com/page.aspx?id=2517. Leashed dogs are welcome! After the hike: option for lunch at La Piazza, Allentown. Inclement weather cancels. Leaders: Leona and George F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

MARCH

Mar 1 (Tues): National Peanut Butter Day Hike at Perrineville Lake Park (Monmouth Co). 10am. 4 miles, easy pace. Leashed dogs are welcome! Beautiful woodlands, natural fields and a picturesque lake meet here in the heart of quiet Millstone. Bring water; leaders will have Peanut Butter snacks. Meet at 23 Agres Rd, Millstone, parking lot. Leashed dogs are welcome. Option, lunch at Albivi Restaurant. Inclement weather cancels. Leaders: Leona and George F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Mar 6 (Sun): Hike at Monmouth Battlefield State Park (Monmouth Co). 10am. 5 miles, easy pace. Monmouth Battlefield State Park is the site of one of the largest battles fought during the Revolutionary War on June 28, 1778. It was during an artillery battle that Mary Hays, known as "Molly Pitcher," carried water for the soldiers to quench their thirst and to cool the cannons. Meet at the Visitors Center, 16 Business Rte 33, Manalapan. Bring lunch, snacks and water. Leashed dogs are welcome! Leaders: Leona and George F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

Mar 12 (Sat): Silas Condict Hike, Kinnelon (Morris Co). 10am. <http://www.morrisparks.net/asp-parks/silasmain.asp> The hike will cover 6 miles in 4 hours in moderately hilly terrain. Facilities: There is a park restroom near the parking lot. Winter Traction devices are required if there is ice or snow on the ground. No pets. Hiking boots and a day-pack with water and lunch required. Registration required via

(continued on page 12)

