Chapter member arrested in DC protest

Catherine Hiller, a novelist, editor and member of the Lower Hudson Group, is arrested at a

Cuomo-backed plan would dump ‘treated’ frack water in Lake Ontario

Niagara water board hires PR firm to push importation of hazardous wastewater

by James Hafner

Tens of millions of people, including those living in Rochester and Toronto, draw their drinking water from Lake Ontario.

Scientists tell governor: Municipal systems can’t filter most frack chemicals

Fifty-nine scientists, including four from the National Academy of Sciences, have warned Gov. Andrew Cuomo that municipal drinking water systems are unable to protect against chemicals used in fracturing for natural gas.

In a letter to Cuomo on September 16, the scientists wrote:

“We urge the state to reconsider its position that existing water filtration systems provide adequate protection against the risk of hydraulic fracturing, should materials from flow-back fluids migrate to lakes, reservoirs, or groundwaters used for municipal water supplies.”

One of the 59 scientists, Robert Howarth, a distinguished professor of ecology at Cornell University and founding editor of a journal, “Biogeochemistry,” told the Albany Times-Union that it would be “extremely expensive” to add filters capable of capturing frack chemicals and that he knows of no municipal system that does so.

“If the risk from shale gas is too high for the watersheds of New York City, then it is too high for any of the watersheds in the state,” Howarth said.

Climate activists turn up the heat with civil disobedience at White House

Plan to build a 1,770-mile pipeline—the Keystone XL—to transport crude oil wrenched from tar sands in Canada to refineries in Texas—has galvanized climate change activists and inspired two weeks of civil disobedience at the White House. The arrest of 1,253 people was the largest such action in decades and signals a new chapter in the effort to rally public support for federal measures to deal with climate change.

Following the White House sit-in arrests (which included members of the Atlantic Chapter), the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, along with seven other Nobel Peace Prize winners, wrote to President Obama asking him to block the pipeline.

Leading environmental writer/educator Bill McKibben and other activists are planning followup actions, described in a letter excerpted below. It begins by noting how the White House sit-in has inspired others:

“• At President Obama’s first public speech since the sit-ins ended, a...
DiNapoli: make gas drillers pay for quick cleanups

New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli has proposed an industry-supported fund to recover damages caused by accidents related to natural gas production. The proposed legislation would apply to current drilling operations as well as to proposed high-volume hydraulic fracturing.

"It’s our job to act quickly when there are accidents, and ethylene glycol, which is used as antifreeze and as laxive, is highly open to question. The March 2011 spill at the Niagara Falls treatment facility is incapable of effectively filtering many of the toxic compounds, which vary according to the unique recipes of scores of different drillers.

There is no place in the country as lax as Niagara Falls with respect to regulatory violations involving water quality," Hang told me. "The granular activated-carbon process is inadequate," Hang contended that the Niagara Falls treatment facility is incapable of effectively filtering many of the toxic compounds, which vary according to the unique recipes of scores of different drillers.

There is no place in the country as lax as Niagara Falls with respect to regulatory violations involving water quality," Hang told me. "The granular activated-carbon process is inadequate," Hang contended that the Niagara Falls treatment facility is incapable of effectively filtering many of the toxic compounds, which vary according to the unique recipes of scores of different drillers.
A CLEAN way to fast-track renewables in New York

by Bob Ciesielski and Bill Nowak

While the fossil fuel and nuclear industries continually tell New Yorkers that renewable energy can’t work, the results of so-called CLEAN programs in other countries speak for themselves.

Now, with a push from Sierrans in California, CLEAN (California Local Energy Accessible Now) programs are gaining traction there, paving a path for New York and other states.

A CLEAN contract system (or feed-in tariff, as it is known in Europe) sets a fixed price for renewable energy sources. Renewable energy generators (homeowners, non-profits, or businesses) sell power from sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, or agricultural biogas are guaranteed long-term (usually 15-20 years) contracts at a fixed price. Generally, the contract price is set at the cost of construction plus a reasonable rate of return (5-10%). The renewable energy supplier is then able to obtain financing from banks and investors, which are guaranteed a reasonable return.

This system of supporting renewable energy development has resulted in a rapid increase in well-paying manufacturing jobs and has been implemented in over 50 countries. In contrast, domestic renewable energy manufacturing jobs have been slow to grow where the U.S. energy system, which is subject to huge spikes and slumps in the cost of energy.

Worldwide experience with FITs especially in Europe) has created a number of best practices for setting prices. For example, prices can be set for different types of renewable energy, i.e., small solar ( rooftop placement), large solar (solar industrial arrays), wind, geothermal, etc. This permits development of a variety of renewable energy sources. In most CLEAN programs, prices are set to decline from year to year by a fixed percentage until renewables reach parity with conventional sources.

The advantages of CLEAN contracts are significant:

- As renewable energy industries grow, their cost per unit of electricity decreases.
- Parties willing to produce renewable energy, even homeowners and small business owners, are able to add an income stream making them stakeholders in clean energy.
- The variety of renewable energy sources ensures a reliable, uninterruptible electricity flow.
- A reduction of fossil fuel emissions reduces health costs.
- The issue of global climate change is addressed on a small scale every time a solar panel or wind turbine is installed.
- Spikes in energy prices, which hamper economic activity, are leveled.
- The standard merit order of paying suppliers for electricity requires that each source of electricity purchased by a utility during a day be paid the same price as the most expensive purchase. Significant purchases of lower priced renewable energy can reduce the final daily costs paid by utility customers, thus reducing costs to consumers.
- The current New York Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) calls for 30% of our electricity to be produced by renewable sources by 2015. This standard already includes 19% of pre-existing sources such as the hydroelectric plants at Passaic and Niagara Falls, so that the NYS goal is actually only 11% of additional electricity from renewables.
- New York’s RPS has been in place for several years. Despite fine efforts by the New York Solar Energy Research and Development Authority, existing incentives are producing renewable electricity only at 40% of the rate necessary to meet the state’s meager renewable goal. New York’s proposed Solar Industry Development and Jobs Act, based largely on New Jersey legislation, is also flawed. New Jersey solar development has been decimated by recent significant decreases in energy prices.
- Short of a statewide CLEAN program, New Yorkers could choose to institute a pilot CLEAN program through the New York Power Authority (NYPA) and/or the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). Authority commissioners can decide to set up renewable energy purchase contracts and use proven best practices of CLEAN contracts for pricing alternative energy. The Atlantic Chapter’s Energy Committee and Beyond Coal Campaign are examining this avenue of kick-starting renewables.
- The CLEAN contract programs established by the Gainesville, Florida, municipal power authority resulted in a 2,000 percent increase in solar power output in two years, and has many solar entrepreneurs in New York.
- Ontario, Canada’s, CLEAN contract program has brought billions of dollars and thousands of jobs in renewable energy into the province since 2009. It is projected that Ontario will install twice as much solar power as California this year.
- Germany, Europe’s industrial powerhouse, currently produces 20% of its electricity from renewable sources. It has a goal of 35% renewable energy by 2020 and 80% by 2050. The country has over 700,000 well-paying jobs in the renewable energy industry. Wind energy alone produced 36.5 billion kilowatt-hour hours of electricity in 2010. In 2010 alone, Germany installed almost a quarter million individual solar systems, totaling 7,400 megawatts of solar capacity.
- In contrast, New York, which gets more sunshine than Germany, currently has pending legislation to develop 5,000 megawatts of solar power by the year 2026. Even this weak bill failed to pass in the 2011 legislative session and was strongly opposed by the fossil fuel industry. What is wrong with this picture?
- Nuclear disasters in Fukushima, Japan, have caused that country to establish a goal of 30,000 megawatts of electricity to be produced by FITs. California is requiring 33% of its electricity to be produced by renewable sources by the year 2020, and forecasts 100,000 new green jobs as a result. Last year California’s informed citizens soundly defeated a ballot proposition proposed and funded by the fossil fuel industry to dismantle the state’s clean energy legislation.
- The fossil fuel industry uses a combination of media propaganda, lobbying efforts and political contributions (often funded by untaxed corporate profits and taxpayer subsidies) to maintain its stranglehold on America’s energy policy. If we are serious about moving our country to a clean and sustainable future, this stranglehold must be broken. While federal Republican legislators hold up signs reading, “drilling equals jobs,” real worldwide job growth is in renewable energy. While Exxon’s paid experts question global climate change, the ice caps melt and the oil states of Texas and Oklahoma break records of 100 plus degree days caused by record drought.
- In two notable cases (October 2010 and January 2011), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has ruled that CLEAN programs may be used where a jurisdiction’s Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requires a percentage of renewable energy to be developed within a certain time frame. These federal decisions have removed a major obstacle to the use of CLEAN contracts in New York.

Adopting a CLEAN program offers New Yorkers a proven way forward to create good jobs and move to a leadership position in the transition to renewable energy. What are we waiting for?

Bob Ciesielski and Bill Nowak are members of the Niagara Group.
It appears that the "fix is in" on water sources, and mandated chemical protection has shown that the DEC has done very little in the past two years to demonstrate that hydrofracking can be conducted safely. Instead, the DEC has offered a series of mitigations that have increased protections for certain areas while permitting drilling in others—but with no underlying sense that hydrofracking can be done safely in the places where drilling is to be permitted.

To be clear, many of the mitigation proposals are welcome—such as a drilling ban on all state forest lands, increased setbacks from drinking water sources, and mandated chemical protection. However, with no underlying sense that hydrofracking can be done safely in the places where drilling is to be permitted...

Without regulations on the books, mitigation will be relaxed or ignored, resulting in unnecessary degradation—with no legal remedy for the public.

Multi-billion dollar price tag

The EPA closely monitors the city’s water quality under a permit- ting structure called a filtration avoidance determination (FAD). At some point water quality standards cannot meet public health requirements, the EPA will order filtration plants to be constructed as an alternative—a mandate that comes with a multi-billion dollar price tag.

In the past year, EPA made it clear to the DEC that it will rescind the FAD if the possibility of drilling is present in the watershed rather than waiting for the first instance of contamination. The DEC had no choice but to ban drilling within the FAD boundaries or else incur the immediate costs of filtration. But the official justification for the ban, written in the SGEIS, is that the sum total of drilling activities—such as the construction of access roads, well pads, and the movement of millions of gallons of potentially hazardous wastes—presents an unacceptable risk to water quality.

If that is the case, then how can the practice be justified for any other region? Millions of New Yorkers within the drilling zone get their water from their own private unfiltered water wells, but do not have the benefit of EPA monitoring or protection, and no amount of mechanical filtration can adequately remediate the chemicals that are in the fracking fluids.

Economics trump health

Cynically, watershed protection in the SGEIS was driven primarily by the negative economic outcome of drilling—not public health concerns. In fact, it would be ironic if economics is driving the entire process. The drum beat for jobs creation and economic development has shifted DEC’s focus from determining the true risks of hydrofracking to creating the financial and permitting structure to make drilling happen.

As part of the SGEIS analysis, the DEC commissioned a study of the socioeconomic impacts of expanded natural gas drilling that portrays, with little or no basis, the potential benefits of drilling activity—the construction of jobs creating juggernaut. The study, which cost the DEC $1,000 per page, failed to acknowledge basic economic concerns of the boom and bust cycles of extractive industries, losses to competing industries such as tourism or agriculture, the lending crisis associated with gas-leased properties, or the externalized costs born on communities from gas development.

It did, however, do something remarkable in that it used long-term predictive modeling, in several phases, to demonstrate the cumulative economic impact of drilling over three separate regions of the state for a 30-year period.

For years now, the DEC has been arguing that it could never conduct a rigorous environmental impact analysis because the future course of gas well development would be impossible to predict. It would appear that if the task can be done to generate rosy economic numbers from mapping theoretical well development, it can also be employed to get a sense of how air quality will be affected, how much capacity the state will need to treat millions of gallons of frac fluid, or how much attention should be given to habitat and biodiversity. Without regulations on the books, mitigation will be relaxed or ignored, and there will be unnecessary degradation—with no legal remedy for the public.

The dSGEIS remains the most pressing forum for whether fracking is safe enough to be permitted in New York, but the real proving ground will be the 2012 budget process.

The DEC clearly does not have the staff to oversee any regulatory program and that is a huge roadblock to development. The Cuomo administration is going to seek massive augmentation of DEC staffing, perhaps as many as 200 new inspectors, and will try to create a severance tax on natural gas revenue to pay for it. For those of us who have been fighting to save DEC staffing positions for years, the challenge will be to support that goal without creating a gas well "permitting mill."

While it may be appear that the fix is in, there is still a path to public participation. Even though the DEC seems to be forging a predetermined path, we have an opportunity to turn that around. By pushing the public to think about this round is that the hearings will serve two purposes: to not only hear the public on its issues with the SGEIS but also solicit its opinion on the new draft regulations issued in October. While the Cuomo administration sees this as a noble cost-saving measure that cuts through unnecessary red tape, others might view it as “the double dipping on hearings” as a subversion of the process, like holding the trial and the sentencing hearing at the same time.

The sad undertone from this lapse of process is that the state has already decided to move forward on fracking—and nothing said in these hearings is going to make any difference.
Chapter forms Beyond Coal Committee  

In June, the Chapter Executive Committee voted to work with the national Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign here in New York, and in August a new Beyond Coal Coalition Committee was created to lead the Chapter’s campaign. Frank Morris and Don Hughes are co-chairs of the Beyond Coal Coalition Committee.

The Beyond Coal Campaign began in the Midwest to block new coal plants because of their potential contribution to air pollution causing global warming. The campaign has since grown in size, ambition, and effectiveness and is now working throughout the country to end the harmful pollution from mining, burning, and disposing of coal and its wastes altogether.

Coal is the leading source of toxic mercury pollution and dozens of other pollutants causing nearly a thousand premature deaths, sending hundreds of children to the hospital with asthma, and costing us millions on our health care bills due to other respiratory diseases in New York every single year.

Recognizing that coal use cannot be separated from our nation’s dysfunctional dependence on fossil fuel, the campaign partnered with the Sierra Club’s Clean Energy campaign. Now, Beyond Coal organizers work around the country with chapters and allies to shift energy use to sustainable sources. Only about 4% of New York’s energy comes from coal-burning power plants, but another 6% of New York’s energy is imported, and much of that comes from dirty coal plants in neighboring states. In contrast, natural gas and oil each generate one third of our energy. This dependence on imported “coal by wire” and on a diversity of fossil fuels means that our Beyond Coal Campaign must focus first and foremost on reducing demand for all fossil fuels.

Negawatts—the power never supplied—is the most efficient form of power available. Efficiency and conservation have long been our Chapter’s preferred energy solution, and efficiency will be the first priority of the Beyond Coal Committee.

While great gains can be made with efficiency alone, new sources of renewable energy should be harnessed in our sustainable energy future, and the committee will be looking at ways to advance the best options for renewable energy.

The committee will also be working to shut down existing coal use in New York, by focusing on individual coal plants that are a burden to their communities.

To get involved, contact Frank Morris (fm@ecologicadvisors.us).

What you can do about fracking: Set DEC straight on these points

If you want to stop hydrofracking in New York, this is your opportunity to make a difference. Please take the time to comment on the draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (dSGEIS) on high volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing. Every letter helps. Comments will be accepted until December 13.


Please consider these central themes in your comments.

- **dSGEIS contains no comprehensive analysis of cumulative impacts.**
- **dSGEIS does not address staff-stress and resources.** The best regulations in the world are worth nothing if they can’t be enforced.
- **dSGEIS refuses to study impacts of pipelines and compressor stations.** Natural gas development cannot happen without the construction of a supporting delivery and pressurization infrastructure that, in some cases, has worse long-term air emissions than the gas wells themselves.
- **dSGEIS does not make new regulations consistent for all drilling.** Vertical oil and gas wells using less than 500,000 gallons of water will remain grandfathered under outdated permitting conditions and will be allowed to use inferior casing standards, open waste pits, and a regulatory framework that dates back to the 1970s. Demand that all oil and gas activity should fall under one set of rules.
- **Disposal of fracking waste in municipal waste water treatment facilities should be banned.** The dSGEIS fails to illustrate the sheer lack of capacity NYS has for the disposal of the anticipated millions of gallons of drilling waste. Instead of banning disposal in our already crumbling municipal infrastructure, the DEC sets parameters that in most situations cannot be met by the plant. Setting up the possibility of disposal when the risks of failure and lack of enforcement are so great is unacceptable.
- **Local ordinances and land-use laws should come before drilling.** The dSGEIS can clarify once and for all that municipalities have the right to enforce land-use ordinances, such as zoning, over oil and gas interests. Instead, the DEC says that it will require that a gas well certificate it complies with local land-use laws, but will issue a drilling permit if a conflict cannot be resolved.
- **Hazardous chemicals in fracking solutions should be banned.** DEC has the power to prohibit dangerous chemicals from the drilling process but has yet to do so. DEC should also revisit its hazardous waste regulations. Current regulations state that no matter what the chemical makeup, drilling wastes cannot be considered hazardous, thus loophole should be closed.

For more analysis of the dSGEIS, please visit: http://tinyurl.com/ 2011SGEISFaws

Roger Downs

**Bloomberg backs Beyond Coal with $50 million grant**

The Sierra Club has formed a partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies that will effectively retire one-third of the nation’s aging coal fleet by 2020, replacing it with clean energy. The partnership includes a $50 million commitment over four years to the Beyond Coal campaign that will fuel the Sierra Club’s efforts to clean the air, end the coal era, and breathe new life into the national Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign here in New York, this is your opportunity to get serious about reducing our carbon footprint in the United States, we have to get serious about coal power production is the right thing to do, because while it may seem to be an inexpensive energy source, the impact on our environment and the impact on public health is signifi-

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The $50 million grant will fill a significant portion of the campaign’s projected $150 million four-year budget and will have a significant impact in advancing the efforts of the Beyond Coal campaign.

The grant will enable the Club to:
- increase the number of Sierra Club campaign staff from 15 to 45;
- increase the active member and supporter base from 1 to 4 million to 2.5 million;
- double the size of full-time Sierra Club staff working on the campaign from 100 to 200.

Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune thanked Bloomberg for the grant, calling it a “game changer” in the fight against coal.
Climate activists turn up the heat on the White House

continued from page 1

Pipeline.

• Canadian activists by the hundreds are risking arrest on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, and brave protesters are trying to block shipments of heavy equipment to Alberta from Idaho and Montana—these are remarkable signs of continent-wide protest.

• And on the not-so-good-side—huge wildfires driven by the worst drought in Texas’ history have destroyed towns and killed good people; the biggest rainfalls ever recorded have done similar damage in New Jersey, New York, and Vermont.

Needed: creativity and bodies

So—there’s real momentum for action, and real need. We have less than 90 days to convince the president not to approve the pipeline. So here’s the thing: we need your help again. We need you to keep using your creativity and bodies as a part of this struggle—to fight this fight even though there’s no guarantee of victory.

Here’s the plan, in three stages:

1. Most important of all: On Sunday, November 6, we will return to Washington. Exactly one year before the election, we want to encircle the whole White House in an act of solemn protest. We need to remind President Obama of the power of the movement that he rode to the White House. This issue is much bigger than any individual person, president or not, and that we should be going back to jail. But unlike last time, this time we’re working from a position of strength, and we can firmly but peacefully remind the president that we were the real power behind his campaign.

We’re not expecting any arrests at this action, but we are expecting to send an unmistakable, unavoidable message. To join the action on the 6th, sign up at http://www.tarsandsaction.org/sign-up.

2. But we have to start building momentum now, with action in our communities. Starting on October 8, we’ll begin a rolling series of actions at key Obama campaign offices around the country. We want these to be a bit bigger and more serious than what’s come before, so we’ll be doing training and providing materials to folks in those communities. We need to make sure that the message gets through to headquarters that people remember the promises from the 2008 campaign and want them kept.

3. We need to keep showing up at the president’s public appearances—just like what’s already been happening on campus after campus, town after town. (We especially like the chant that goes: “Yes We Can...Stop the Pipeline.”). Our organizing team is tracking the president’s every appearance to look for opportunities to act. If the president is coming to your neighborhood, we need you to get his attention. (We’ll help you do that).

‘We’ve already shown we have the courage and the fortitude for civil disobedience. Now we need to mix it up and show a different side of the campaign. Many of us were sincerely moved by Barack Obama’s campaign for president. We’re not yet ready to concede that his promises were simply the empty talk of politicians. We’re not going to be cynics until we absolutely have no choice.

‘It will be a beautiful and brave sight, the White House enclosed by the kind of people that put President Obama there. Since he’s said he’ll make up his mind by the end of the year, now’s the time. We know it’s hard to get to Washington, but if you can: this is the moment.”

The call to followup action is signed by Tim DeChristopher, inmate, Federal Correctional Institution, Herlong, California (see page 7); Tom Goldtooth, Indigenous Environmental Network; Courtney Hight and Maura Conoley; Energy Action Coalition; Jane Kleeb, Bold Nebraska; Bill McKibben, tarsandsaction.org; Gus Speth, former chair President’s Council on Environmental Quality; Becky Tarboton, Rainforest Action Network; and Lennox Yearwood, Hip Hop Caucus.

We need your help to fight fracking, maintain the Chapter’s other critical conservation efforts and continue print publication of the Sierra Atlantic. Your membership dues primarily support the Club’s work in the state Legislature and throughout the state. Please use the coupon below to send us your donation. Contributions and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our efforts, effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Thank you.

Support chapter’s work in NYS

Yes, I want to help the Atlantic Chapter preserve and protect the environment of New York state. I am enclosing my gift of:

- $500  $250  $100  $60  $50  $35  Other $______
- Check made payable to Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter is enclosed.
- I’d like to make a single payment by credit card.
- I’d like to become a sustainer with a $______ monthly or $_____ quarterly credit card donation.
- Bill to:  Mastercard  Visa
- Acct. no.  Exp. date
- Signature ____________________________
- Name _______________________________
- Sierra Club membership no. ___________
- City__________________________________  State ______ZIP________

Mail this completed form with your check or credit card information to:

Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, PO Box 886, Syosset, NY 11791-0886

A copy of our latest financial report can be obtained by writing to Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, PO Box 886, Syosset, NY 11791-0886, or the NYS Attorney General, Dept. of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

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Susquehanna  Julian Shepherd, 607-722-9327, jshepherd@binghamton.edu

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‘We’re not certain this is the right plan. We don’t know if there are the thousands of people that it will take to encircle the White House—we’ve never tried something this ambitious before. And we worry that it’s too earnest and idealistic—that maybe we should be going back to jail. But unlike last time, this time we’re working from a position of strength, and we can firmly but peacefully remind the president that we were the real power behind his campaign.

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I’m a patriot, jailed activist DeChristopher tells judge at sentencing

DeChristopher has been sentenced to 2 years in federal prison and fined $10,000 after he was convicted on two felony counts for making a fake bid at a government oil and gas auction. He bid for 14 parcels of land that Bill McKibben has described as “gorgeous.” The auction was later ruled illegal by a federal judge. Here are excerpts from DeChristopher’s compelling statement to the court before sentencing.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the court.

...I agree with the founding fathers in the ascent of science of the community and a defense against legislative tyranny...

I have also made public statements about the role of citizen science of the community and a defense against legislative tyranny.

...The auction was delayed, extra attention was needed to volunteer for the industry that was being exploited around. The closer we get to that point where it’s too late, the less people have to lose by fighting back....

...The things that I’ve been publicly saying may indeed be threatening to those industry staff that I have been speaking to....

The auction was overturned. Order 3226, which required the BLM to weigh the impacts on climate change, was overturned. The decision you are about to make is not the only one that I have presented by my actions and words that might lead others to action....

The government’s concern is that the seriousness of corporate sponsors to be above the law. The rule of law, I advocate that citizens step up to that responsibility. The rule of law begins when the government believes itself and its citizens to be above the law. The rule of law is democratic empowerment...about recognizing the interconnection of the actions of this industry and the people that have openly and explicitly called for stopping the auction in question was not a lawful government proceedings. “But the sentencing guidelines don’t mention the need to protect corporations or politicians....The guidelines say ‘protect the public.’ The question is whether the public is helped or harmed by my actions. The easiest way to answer that question is with the direct impacts of my action. As the oil executive stated in his testimony, the parcels I didn’t bid on averaged $12.92 per acre, but the ones I did bid on averaged $125. The industry admits very openly that they were getting those parcels for an order of magnitude less than what they were worth....

Most of the parcels I won were later deemed inappropriate for drilling. In other words, the highest and best use to the public for those particular lands was not for oil and gas drilling. Had the auction gone off without a hitch, it would have been a loss for the public. The fact that the auction was delayed, extra attention was brought to the process, and the parcels were ultimately revoked was a good thing for the public. It is inherent to civil disobedience is an attempt at change. Those who are inspired to follow my actions understand that we are on a path toward catastrophic climate change. They know their future, and the future of their loved ones, is on the line. And they know we are running out of time to turn things around. The closer we get to that point where it’s too late, the less people have to lose by fighting back....

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...Civil disobedience is inherently a bad thing. The decision you are about to make is not the only one that I have presented by my actions and words that might lead others to action....

The auction was overturned. Order 3226, which required the BLM to weigh the impacts on climate change, was overturned. The decision you are about to make is not the only one that I have presented by my actions and words that might lead others to action....

The majority of the people that I’ve been speaking to....

...The most effective tool of control in America, and every reminder of our real nature, is on the other side of the communities where fossil fuels are extracted. The exploitation of local water is to make sure they are so poisoned that they won’t use it. The areas with the richest fossil fuel resources, whether coal in West Virginia and Kentucky, or oil in Louisiana and Mississippi, are the areas with the lowest standards of living. In part, this is a necessity of the industry. The only way to convince someone to blow up their backyard or poison their water is to make sure they are so desperate that they have no other option. But it is also the nature of the economic model. Since fossil fuels are a limited resource, whoever controls access to that resource in the coming decades...

"Every good thing, great and small, needs defense" - John Muir

Join Sierra Club and help protect all treasures, great and small.
Grousing about the woodland terrorists

It happened again just last week I got bushwhacked by another ruffed grouse. Darned bird nearly scared me to death; took two, maybe three, years of my life.

I wasn’t doing much, either—just snapping twigs for kindling behind the house—when all of a sudden this land-to-air missile exploded from out of nowhere, roars by my nose at 90 miles an hour and leaves me standing there with my mouth flapping up and down but no words coming out.

Not very nice. I still get shaky when my doctor makes me talk about it. “Verbalize,” he says. “You’ve got to verbalize the experience or you won’t get better.”

So I’m verbalizing, and I do feel a little bit better. But why do grouse have to do that? Why do they feel obliged to lie in ambush and then erupt in someone’s face? Why can’t they just sit in the trees and watch what’s going on, or take a nap and crack an eyelid every 20 minutes to see how things are progressing?

The docs claim they tried that once in the 1600s. It didn’t work out.

In those days, he says, America was a wilderness, and ruffed grouse were very tame. People didn’t frighten them. There were Indian tribes about, but not many; and they didn’t carry shotguns.

The grouse population, as a consequence, appeared pretty darned friendly when the first European settlers began showing up along the eastern seaboard. In fact, grouse would sit on tree branches when people approached and not fly away.

“Look, here come some settlers,” the grouse would say, and just sit there. The settlers then bonked them with sticks and popped them in crocks pots.

To the credit of ruffed grouse, relatives of the bonkies quickly realized that meaningful dialogue with humans was ill-advised. After only a few generations, grouse in populated areas became extremely wary. Not only that, they began devising escape strategies that would turn more than one great white hunter into a blob of jangled nerve endings.

These strategies have been collected under the title Diversionsary. Tactics for Ruffed Grouse in Combat Zones. They’ve become required reading for every grouse in the summer of its first year.

Tactic No. 42 is the one that gets me. The complete text follows:

“Tactic No. 42
- Surprise. Human approaches on path flanked by white birch and trembling aspen. Grouse hunkers motionless in leaves by the side of said path. Bird’s mottled plumage of buff, gray and brown provides it with perfect camouflage.
- When human approaches to within 3 feet, grouse erupts with a great thundering of wings. Flight path carries it within 6 inches of human’s nose. Human gasps.
- Noise, violent swirling of dry leaves and confusion ensue: Human turns a sickly off-white. Grouse disappears behind trunk of large aspen within 89 seconds. Human begins ranting incoherently about property taxes and tuition credits.”

Now I like grouse, but that is any way to treat an innocent kindling piece? I don’t even own a crock pot.

Naturalist Rick Marsi, a member of the Susquehanna Group, is a journalist, public speaker and leader of eco-tours.


A.G. wins federal ruling on Indian Point

New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has won a federal ruling in ongoing efforts to improve Indian Point’s accident preparedness.

The Atomic Safety and Licensing Board issued a decision, agreeing with New York that Indian Point, located near Peekskill, cannot be relicensed without completing the legally-required analyses of its severe accident mitigation measures. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) must require Indian Point’s owner, Entergy, to either adopt cost-effective upgrades that would improve responses and control the impact of a severe accident, or provide a compelling reason why it will not do so.

“Severe accidents cannot be treated as impossibilities, and this critical ruling confirms that Indian Point must follow regulations to protect the public and control the effects of a potentially severe nuclear accident,” Attorney General Schneiderman said. “We will not permit the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Entergy to procrastinate or limit the relicensing review.”

As part of the relicensing proceeding, nuclear power plants are required to identify the environmental impacts that could be caused by a severe accident and provide analyses of upgrades that could protect the public if one were to occur.

The measures include improvements in equipment, training or procedures. In its environmental review, Entergy identified 20 such measures at Indian Point Units 2 and 3, including flood protection and auxiliary power improvements.

However, the NRC did not require Entergy to complete analyses of those measures, or to require that the measures be adopted, thereby violating NRC’s own regulations, as well as those of two laws. Despite an obligation to conduct a full review, both Entergy and the NRC sought to limit the severe accident analyses to a narrow set of components.

The ruling marks the first successful motion of its kind filed by an intervenor in such a proceeding. It is the attorney general’s latest success raising such issues. Earlier the NRC accepted New York’s petition for fire safety enforcement at Indian Point.

In February, Schneiderman sued the NRC for authorizing the storage of radioactive waste at nuclear power facilities for at least 60 years after they close—without first conducting the necessary environmental, public health and safety studies...
When will the food bubble burst?

Our early 21st-century civilization is in trouble. We need not go beyond the world food economy to see this. Over the last few decades we have created a food production bubble—one based on environmental trends that cannot be sustained, including overpumping aquifers, overplowing land, and overloading the atmosphere with carbon dioxide,” notes Lester Brown, president of the Earth Policy Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based environmental research organization.

“If we cannot reverse these trends, economic decline is inevitable,” Brown says. “No civilization has survived the ongoing destruction of its natural support systems. Nor will ours.

“The archeological records of earlier civilizations indicate that more often than not it was food shortages that led to their downfall. Food appears to be the weak link for our global civilization as well. And unlike the recent U.S. housing bubble, the food bubble is global.

“The question is not whether the food bubble will burst, but when,” Brown says. While the U.S. housing bubble was created by the overextension of credit, the food bubble is based on the overuse of land and water resources. It is further threatened by the climate stresses deriving from the excessive burning of fossil fuels.

“When the U.S. housing bubble burst, it sent shock waves through the world economy, culminating in the worst recession since the Great Depression. When the food bubble bursts, food prices will soar worldwide, threatening economic and political stability everywhere. For those living on the lower rungs of the global economic ladder, survival itself could be at stake.

“The danger signs are everywhere. In the summer of 2010, record high temperatures scorched Moscow from late June through mid-August. Western Russia was so hot and dry in early August that 300 to 400 new fires were starting every day. The average temperature in Moscow for July was a scarcely believable 14 degrees Fahrenheit above the norm. Watching the heat wave play out over the seven-week period on the TV evening news, with the thousands of fires and smoke everywhere, was like watching a horror film. Over 56,000 people died in the extreme heat. Russia’s 140 million people were in shock, traumatized by what was happening to them and their country. Brown says in World on the Edge, his most recent book.

“The record heat shrank Russia’s grain harvest from roughly 100 million tons to 60 million tons. This 40 percent drop and the associated grain export ban helped drive world wheat prices up 60 percent in two months, raising bread prices worldwide.

“Crop ecologists estimate that for each 1 degree Celsius rise in temperature above the norm during the growing season, grain yields decline by roughly 10 percent. In parts of Western Russia, the spring wheat crop was totally destroyed by the crop-withering heat and drought. As the Earth’s temperature rises, the likelihood of more numerous, more intense heat waves increases.

“How much time do we have before the food bubble bursts?” Brown asks. “No one knows. If we stay with business as usual, the time is more likely measured in years than in decades. We are now so close to the edge that politically destabilizing food price rises could come at any time.”

“For example, Brown notes that if the 2010 heat wave centered in Moscow had instead been centered in Chicago, it could easily have reduced the U.S. grain harvest of 400 million tons by 40 percent, or 160 million tons World Carryover stocks of grain for 2011—the amount remaining in the bin when the new harvest begins—would have dropped to an all-time low of 52 days of consumption, well below the 62-day carryover that set the stage for the tripling of world grain prices in 2007-08.

“In short, Brown says, ‘if the July temperature in Chicago were to average 14 degrees above the norm, as it did in Moscow, there would be chaos in world grain markets.’ Grain prices would quickly climb off the chart. Food prices would soar worldwide. Many grain-exporting countries, trying to hold down domestic food prices, would restrict or even ban exports, as they did in 2007-08.

“The exporting countries would try to barter oil for grain. Low-income grain importers would lose out. Instead of being dominated by scenes of smoke and fire in Moscow, the TV evening news would run footage of fire rots in low-income grain-importing countries and carry reports of spreading hunger, falling governments, and failing states. With governments collapsing and with confidence in the world grain market shattered, the global economy could start to unravel.

“Rising temperatures are not the only threat to world food security. So too is the depletion of aquifers from overpumping for irrigation. In Saudi Arabia, grain production is collapsing as aquifer depletion has reduced its wheat harvest by two-thirds in three years. It is not alone. The Middle East is the first geographic region where the grain harvest has started to shrink as aquifers are depleted and as irrigation wells go dry.

“On a far larger scale, a World Bank study indicates that 175 million people in India are being fed with grain produced by overpumping. For China, the equivalent figure is 150 million people. Countries can overpump in the short run, but not over the long run.

“And there are signs that a combination of trends, including aquifer depletion and the piling of millions of acres of cropland for new cars, is about to force China to import massive quantities of grain, much as it already does for soybeans. When this happens, China will necessarily turn to the United States, which is far and away the world’s largest grain exporter. For American consumers, for whom food security has never been a major issue, the prospect of competing for the U.S. grain harvest with 1.4 billion Chinese consumers with fast-rising incomes is a nightmare scenario.

“The new reality,” Brown says, “is that the world is only one poor harvest away from chaos. It is time to redefine security. The principal threats to our future are no longer armed aggression but instead climate change, population growth, water shortages, spreading hunger, and failing states.

“When we now need is a mobilization to reverse these trends on the scale and urgency of the U.S. mobilization for World War II. The challenge is to quickly reduce carbon emissions, stabilize population, and restore the economy’s soils, aquifers, forests, and other natural support systems. This requires not only a redefining of security but a corresponding reallocation of fiscal resources from military budgets to budgets for climate stabilization, population stabilization, water conservation, and other new threats to security.”

“For decades, environmentalists have talked about saving the planet. Now it is civilization itself that is at stake, Brown says.

Lester Brown, a Sierran, is founder of the Earth Policy Institute and author or coauthor of 50 books.
Candidates for at-large seats to the Chapter Executive Committee

Following are the unedited statements, in random order, received from candidates for at-large seats to the Chapter's Executive Committee. See ballot on page 12.

Arthur Kypurs

My name is Arthur Kypurs. Raised and educated in the Netherlands, I have three children and live in Brooklyn, NY. I retired from a 20-year career in banking and now devote myself to family life.

I have been actively involved with the Chapter since 2010. In the summer of 2010, I attended a hydrofracking lobby day and understood the importance of community and citizen participation in the legislative process. Subsequently, I have served on the Hydrofracking Task Force, the Legislative Committee and the Spectra Pipeline Task Force. I currently hold the position of Chair of Chapter Vice Chair, am on the Chapter “Beyond Coal Campaign” Committee and participate in the Chapter’s Green Jobs, Green NY and Water Sentinels programs.

I believe that energy politics drive environmental policy and often lead to questionable legislation. The assumption that there are no costs associated with environmental damage contributes to the poor quality of political decisions. In reality, the cost of the resulting environmental damage — such as clean up costs, loss of livelihood, health care costs, infrastructure costs, litigation costs — are all disproportionately born by the community. Consider hydrofrackers that avoid the cost of processing their dangerous waste products, and hereby cause immensurable damage to communities and the environment. The end result: seemingly sustainable growth.

Growing up in the Netherlands, a country that gave land back to the sea when wetland flora and fauna diversity diminished, I have experienced first hand how common well being can be increased by recognizing environmental costs. I seek a position on the executive committee to work with its members to realize improved energy and environmental policies.

Jim Lane

I joined the Sierra Club in 1981. The main thing I’ve learned in thirty years is that good intentions are not enough. Being right is not enough. Even though we care about the environment, and scientists can tell us much more about issues like global warming, humans are now damaging the planet more than ever before. The Sierra Club’s role is to bridge that gap by educating the public and mobilizing volunteers to take effective action.

Within the Club, the Executive Committee’s role is to keep the organizational machine running so that the important work can proceed. How are we doing that? Organizational efficiency, effective, but overall we’ve done well.

We’ve won several battles despite our constraints of money and volunteer time.

I first became active in the Club in 1988. As a member of the New York City Group ExCom, I worked on keeping nuclear weapons out of New York harbor. Since then I’ve also served at various times as Group Chair and Group Secretary of the NYC Group. At the Atlantic Chapter, I’ve been Chapter Secretary, Chapter Bylaws Committee Chair, Political Compliance Officer; and a member of the ExCom and the Steering Committee.

Other environmental issues I’ve taken on include: pollution of national tracts, lead paint poisoning, protecting the Hudson River and its waterfront.

As an attorney in private practice, I’ve provided legal advice and pro bono representation in court for the Club and other environmentalists.

You can reach me at JimLane@americagmail.com.

Diane Buxbaum

Global warming is the worst crisis. Like the Arab Spring, the U.S. summer has heightened our awareness. I am personally committed to reducing our addiction to fossil fuels, support sustainable forms of energy, and I ask for your support of my candidacy for Atlantic Chapter delegate.

Through public education meetings, support of Sierra Club campaigns, and activist campaigns with other environmental organizations I will work towards:

- Creating a culture of sustainable living
- Reduce levels of consumption of natural resources, protect ecologically significant habitats and preserve all species
- Creating a sustainable New York: Promote energy-efficient construction and rehabilitation, and green and white roofs. Protect our forests and natural areas, restore wetlands, prohibit shoreline development. Promote wind (where appropriate) and solar energy initiatives

Public Education:

- Publicizing how excessive population and consumption impacts global climate change, reduces our efficiency, sprawl, and degradation of the human condition. We must work with other environmental organizations on population and environmental impacts

Club activities:

- NYC Conservation Chair, member: City ExCom,Chapter ExCom, and Population Committee Co-Chair; current: Chair Gotham Canal Committee, member state Global Climate Change Task Force, Office & Personnel Committee; past volunteer Central Park Zoo and American Museum of Natural History

Education:

- Doctoral studies field ecology, Fordham, MPH Columbia University, MSc Environmental Health Science, Hunter College; BA Zoology, UCLA

Employment: EPA 1982 present, Environmental Consultant, risk assessment, enforcement, compliance assistance, EPA Gold, Silver Medal recipient; Fred Hart Inc., Environmental Consultant’s Hunter College, Assistant Professor, Environmental Health Science

We must act. Inaction is not an option!

Erin Heaton

Armork, NY

I became involved with the Lower Hudson Chapter upon learning of the lobbying work surrounding un-conventional shale gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing (fracking), am on the Atlantic Chapter’s Gas Drilling Task Force and am a co-founder of Chapter’s Call to Action for Renewable Energy (C-CARE). C-CARE raises awareness of the negative impacts associated with fracking and mobilizes local communities to participate in protecting their clean water and air while pushing for the necessary shift to alternative energy. We believe the long-term economic well-being of Chenango County, in the center of the Marcellus Shale region, is based on the protection of our environment and the development of renewable energy, sustainable agri-cultural practices and recreational enterprise.

Professionally I am a school librarian in Westchester County and served four terms on the board of the Hudson Valley Library Association as both President and Treasurer. I strive to instill a passion for inquiry and research in my students as well as an understanding of sustainability and our interdependence on our planet and the other planet. Children and adults alike naturally wish to solve problems and to feel empowered that their volunteer efforts are interested in working with the Executive Committee of the Atlantic Chapter to positively engage a greater number of New Yorkers on the issue of fracking, expand membership and lend a louder voice to the call for the Sierra Club to truly support an alternative energy source: one without nuclear and fossil fuels, particularly natural gas, as a bridge.

Art Klein

My life prepared me for nearly any Sierra Club mission. I am the Vice-Chairman of the Niagara Group Executive Committee and Delegate to the Atlantic Chapter. I can use my dedication and experience more effectively as an At-large Delegate. I would like to broaden the geographic base of the Chapter to include Western New York.

I grew up intimate to nature in farm country north of Buffalo.

I learned of our declining bounty in 1949 when I worked a commercial fish boat and the crew pointed at the ten boxes of fish we filled each day. Before the war, they assured me, thirty or more boxes were common.

Later a yearman, I worked the St. Lawrence Seaway and learned the consequences of poorly planned projects. We traded marginal economic benefit for increased invasive species in the Great Lakes afterward. I worked all the Great Lakes and witnessed smutty, oil-slicked waters were accepted as the price of progress.

A waterways investigator in the Corps of Engineers from 1973 to 1990, I had a direct role in the preservation and restoration of water quality and habitat in freshwater habitats, especially wetlands.

I am a long time bicycle advocate and active in outdoor recreation as an advisor to American Outdoor Recreation Association, Mountain Club, Niagara Chapter, for over 20 years. I serve on the DEC Open Space Committee.

My current Sierra involvement includes nuclear and toxic waste climate and energy, open space conservation, forest and park policies, and transportation.

Frank Morris

It’s been a privilege to serve on the executive committee of the Atlantic Chapter for the last several years. As Chairperson of Long Island Sierra Club and Vice Chairperson of NYC Sierra Club, I’ve helped to raise over $40,000 for Sierra Club activities throughout the county and the cultivation of major donors. I recently ran for the Board of National Sierra Club, took a direct stand against gas hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and received 19,000 votes. With Mayor Bloomberg’s 50 million dollar gift to Sierra Club, I’ll be working with NYS Sierrans and allies nationally to shut down coal and nuclear power plants. America needs to replace coal, gas, oil, and nuke with energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy storage. I can be reached at f.m@ecologicadvisors to discuss environmental issues or to share ideas related to this vote.

Hal Bauer

“As a first term, At Large Chapter delegate, Hydrofracking member and Wilderness Chair (wilds@newyork.sierracclub.org) from rural New York, I have gained an understanding of Chapter capacities to serve a second term. I operate a small NOFA-NY farm, and as a longtime member of the Sierra Club, and national science associations. I studied animal/human behavior in Africa, Europe and Canada and several years, returning upstate for research in the 1990s and to raise 2 children now in universities.

Increasing women's rights, education, health and reproductive choice is an essential means to address human sustainability. When I entered my NYC high school in 1960, humans were 5 billion strong. By the early 1970s, while studying apes in Africa, we added another billion. Last year, the population of Western Finger Lakes/raising my kids, we reached 6 billion. Now in 2011 we are 7 billion humans. All are demanding renewable and non-renewable more resources, depleting carbon-energy dependent climate, political and economic demands. We are raising our atmospheric CO2 to past 400 ppm, burning ancient carbon, formed from ancient sunlight. Extreme oil drilling led to the BP oil spill of 2010, and the immediately connected US government's prohibition to ban Hydrofracking of NYS and the Tar Sands Pipeline from Alberta-to-Texas, will be associated with more ex-

continued on page 11
Newest ways to use cashew creme show its versatility

by Betsy Naselli

I am sharing one of my favorite things: cashew creme! I think I may have introduced cashew creme in this column before, perhaps in one of my favorite vegan vodka sauce recipes, or maybe as a raw dessert topping. Now I am going hog-wild and sharing a couple of my newest ways to use cashew creme in vegan cooking.

Cashew creme can masquerade as ricotta, whipped cream or yogurt, filling, depending on how you season it and how thick you make it. To make the basic cashew creme you will soak two cups of raw cashews at least 6 to 8 hours (overnight is fine); drain and rinse; puree in a high-speed blender or a food processor with enough water to cover and facilitate blending (for the thickest creme) or more water for a thinner consistency, until very smooth. This will make about two and a half cups of thick-ish creme. Store this in the refrigerator. Now, watch what we can do!

Ricotta-style Creme
1C of cashew creme (see above)
1 lb of firm tofu, pressed and squeezed dry
1T nutritional yeast
1T mellow or chickpea miso
1t onion powder
juice of one lemon
1/2 t sea salt
Place all ingredients in food processor and pulse to process until the consistency of ricotta.

Jalapeno Poppers
(1/4 C. healthy, vegan way)
abruptly (no C. of ricotta style cashew creme (recipe above))
1T chopped fresh rosemary
1T chopped fresh parsley
7 jalapeno peppers, halved, seeded, rinsed and dried
1/4C. non-dairy shredded cheese (like Daiya)
salt and pepper
Preheat oven to 550 degrees. Blend first three ingredients; add salt and pepper to taste. Fill the prepared jalapeno halves and place on a parchment or Silpat lined baking sheet. Top each half with a sprinkling of the shredded cheese. Bake for about 20 minutes, until the tops are golden. You don’t want the pep per halves to be too soft, they should still hold their shape when picked up.

Herb and Veggie Tart

Herbed Crust
1 1/2C. whole wheat flour
3/4C. of whole wheat pastry flour
1t onion powder
1/2 t sea salt
1/2t dried oregano
1/2t dried basil
1/2t chopped fresh parsley
1/2t dried thyme
1/2t dried rosemary
3/4C. of whole cherry tomatoes
2 hard-boiled eggs
3 green onions, chopped
1/2C. of fresh basil, julienned
4 T. of chopped parsley
Filling
1C. of ricotta style cashew creme
1C. of fresh basil, julienned
1t onion powder
1/2t sea salt
Preheat oven to 415 degrees.

-Blend first three ingredients; add salt and pepper to taste. Mix the egg mixture and pour over the crust and fold the extra pastry around the edge down over the filling to hold it in place.
-Top each half with a sprinkle of grated cheese and pack on the fresh basil and parsley. Bake for about 20 minutes, until the tops are golden and the filling is firm. It’s true. I have only been a Sierra Club member since 2006, but in that time I’ve served as the Chair of the Finger Lakes Group, Ex Comm Group Delegate and as Chair of the Atlantic Chapter. I have also served, and continue to serve, in a number of other environmental organizations over the years.

During the period of my Sierra Club membership, we’ve lived through two presidents, three governors, and three DEC Commissioners. Environmental protections have thinned, Pennsylvania has been pil-laged, the tar sands are being eyed as a viable energy resource, and evidence for accelerating climate change is mounting. Whether better use of natural resources. To learn more and better use of natural resources. To learn more and to join the movement, contact the Biodiversity and Vegetarian Outreach Committee at BIODIVERSITY@sierraclub.org, 1254-500-2143, 9031 Ormond aides. Click on “Con-servative” at the top. Or go to www.newyork.sierraclub.org. To learn more about environmental issues, click on “Biodiversity Vegetarian Outreach” at BIODIVERSITY@sierraclub.org. To learn more about environmental issues, click on “Biodiversity Vegetarian Outreach” at BIODIVERSITY@sierraclub.org.
Sierra Club Return Service Requested
Atlantic Chapter
PO Box 421041
Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

Rochester

Fracking, forum and flora among Group’s activities

It was a busy spring and summer for our Rochester Regional Group: About 200 attended our 13th Annual Environmental Forum, “Sustainable Production: Rochester’s Leading Edge,” to hear two globally recognized business leaders who call Rochester home.

We’ve been extremely busy on the hydrofracking issue: We conducted 8 showings of Gasland for about over 200 people, are growing our Action Alert list and using it to announce opportunities for Action, and we participated in the Chapter’s Lobby Day with visits to about eight state legislators.

Our Great Lakes Committee has lobbied Congress and our State legislature to implement elements of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Compact, such as the Water Withdrawal Bill. On a local level, they will be hosting community movies on water quality, scarcity, and privatization.

Our Transportation Committee has been working with local bicycling advocates to add climate change as another reason to make Rochester a more bicycle-friendly community.

Our Wetlands Committee is a driving force behind a community organization that obtained a $20k DEC grant to naturalize a beloved creek that travels through a public school campus; this is exciting because has engaged students, teachers, residents, small business owners, and more so successfully.

Similarly, we are part of a community organization called Friends of Washington Grove that is removing invasive species and planting native flora in a much beloved city park. Thanks to this project, 27 folks came out on a Saturday for a lesson on plant identification. Thank you to the Chapter for a grant that helped us to purchase native trees for this project!

Finally, our Zero Waste Committee had a big win when Monroe County recently announced that as of June 1, it is finally facilitating recycling of plastics that helped us to purchase native trees for this project!

#5-7, in addition to numbers 1 and 2, in response to significant demand from residents. Congrats, Zero Waste Team! It’s on to the next Zero Waste challenge.

We’re proud of our successes with these efforts and with engaging concerned members and citizens, and we know that there is a lot more work to be done.

LINDA ISAACSON FIDEL

Susquehanna

Group promotes ways to reduce carbon footprint

Ways to reduce our carbon footprint, exercise more and save money have been our themes in the past year’s activities. Our focus is to bring attention to environmental issues through education, community and political activism, outreach, outings and monthly meetings with guest speakers exploring a range of topics. This year’s invited speakers delivered presentations on “Environmental Legislation before the NYS Assembly,” by local entrepreneurs on solar power, geothermal heating and cooling, natural history and environmental travel.

The Susquehanna Group held a public event, linking with the worldwide 350.org and Sierra Club National event, 10-10-10, at the Downtown Binghamton University Center: “Teach in to Promote Bicycles as Commute Vehicle and Reduce Our Oil Footprint and Enjoy Exercise.” A group bike ride along the Trail followed the teach in. The group bike ride invitation was extended as an Earth Day activity and to this summer’s group bike rides to local farmers’ markets.

Members participated in City of Binghamton initiatives encouraged by our progressive mayor, Matt Ryan: a Climate Action Plan, Neighborhood Assemblies, Shade Tree Commission and Community Gardens; we also led efforts to temper parking logs in Broome County and Town of Vestal parks.

Every year we honor someone who excels in his/her service to and for the environment. This year the Annual Lynda Spickard award went to Stacy Mersola, former county environmental analyst—a victim of Broome County budgetary cuts—for engaging in real environmental analysis.

Members participated this spring in in-district lobbying of three state legislators, in-district lobbying of our state senator for NYS Solar Jobs and Development Act, and participated in a press conference with Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo on passage of Complete Streets Act, as well as presenting comments at local DEC and EPA hearings.

The Susquehanna Group tabled at four local Earth Day events this spring, engaging the public in conversation. An exhibit where adults and children continued on page 8

Atlantic Chapter executive committee
2011 election for at-large delegates

To be eligible to vote in the election, you must be a member in good standing of the Atlantic Chapter as of the mailing of this newsletter in the fall of 2011. Please read all the candidates’ statements on pages 10-11. Indicate your choices by checking the boxes next to the candidates’ names on the ballot on this page. Each member may fill out only one ballot. Joint members use both ballots. Ballots should not be cut or separated.

Each member may vote for up to five candidates. You may vote for fewer than five, but voting for more than five will void your ballot.

DO NOT cover up your mailing address. It is used to verify that the ballot is being returned by an Atlantic Chapter member. It will be removed before the ballots are counted. Secrecy will be ensured.

Putting your folded ballot in an envelope is the best way to send it. This greatly reduces the possibility of damage during mailing. If you don’t use an envelope, please fold and secure as indicated. Please TAPE IT—NO STAPLES!

Affix a first-class stamp and mail to: Elections Committee, Sierra Club, Susquehanna Group, PO Box 572, Endicott, NY 13760.

Members who do not receive a ballot, or who damage or lose their ballot, may request a replacement from Atlantic Chapter office employees. They will send you a replacement ballot bearing your member number and the signature of a Chapter staff member. Only such replacement ballots sent to you from Chapter staff will be counted. No replacement ballots will be issued after December 15, 2011.

If you have any questions or problems, contact Chapter staff at 516-672-8252. Allow enough time for your problem or question to be resolved before the deadline. Mail your ballots so that they are received on or before December 31, 2011. Ballots will be counted in early January, 2012.

NOTE: Single memberships use one ballot. Joint memberships use both ballots.

Choose up to five candidates.

Ballot 1

☐ Arthur Kuypers
☐ Jim Lane
☐ Diane Buxbaum
☐ Erin Heaton
☐ Art Klein
☐ Frank Morris
☐ Hal Bauer
☐ Kate Bartholomew

Ballot 2

☐ Arthur Kuypers
☐ Jim Lane
☐ Diane Buxbaum
☐ Erin Heaton
☐ Art Klein
☐ Frank Morris
☐ Hal Bauer
☐ Kate Bartholomew

Choose up to five candidates. Ballot 1

Choose up to five candidates. Ballot 2