



**SIERRA CLUB** **Hudson/Mohawk Group**  
FOUNDED 1892



January 2003 Vol. 27 No. 1

*"Aspens" by Ansel Adams in This is the American Earth*

## Upcoming Events

### Urban Sprawl and the Race to Preserve Open Space – Land Conservancies and Trusts in the Capital Region

**Tuesday, January 14, 2003, 7:00 pm**  
**Colonie Public Library**

Join us for an evening of enlightening discussion about our disappearing open space and what some groups are doing about it. Leaders from several area land conservancies will be on hand to share their work in finding creative ways of preserving open space. Urban sprawl is one of the four primary campaigns of the national Sierra Club. Here is a chance to see what efforts are being made to combat it at the grassroots level. For information call John at 279-4777.

The library is located at 626 Albany-Shaker Road, just east of Northway exit 4 at Wolf Road.

### Sierra Club Social

**Monday, January 27, 7:30 pm**  
**Malt River Brewing Co., Latham**

Interested in getting involved with our local Sierra Club Group and making new friends? If so, join us for some light-hearted discussions about who we are and how we work. For information contact John Nemjo at 279-4777.

Malt River Brewing Company is just off the Northway and Route 9 at the Latham Circle Mall.

### Outings

**Saturday, January 11-** Ski the 4 3/4 mile **Newcomb Lake Road to Camp Santanoni** in the Adirondacks.

**Saturday, February 8-** **Winter Outdoor-a-Thon.** Snowshoe and Ski the **Tivoli Preserve** in Albany.

For more details on these outings, see page 4.

### Executive Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 pm**  
**St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Albany**

Please call Pete Sheehan, 489-5803, to confirm. In addition, the **Conservation Committee Organizing Meeting for 2003** will take place on Wednesday, January 22, at 7 pm. All members are welcome to attend these meetings. See page 2 for details.

## Open Space or Sprawl in Saratoga?

By **Bill Koebbeman**

Officials and citizens in Saratoga County are struggling with decisions regarding development. Are we witnessing a desire to balance development with preservation or just confusion over our direction and ultimate goal? You decide.

Citizens of Wilton defeated an open space referendum, but their neighbors in Saratoga Springs just passed a five million dollar bond issue to preserve open space. About the same time, the Saratoga City Planning Board approved an intensive commercial/residential development on 25 acres of undeveloped land at Northway Exit 15. The project was approved over the objections of many citizens who argued that it would bring excessive traffic to their neighborhood and compete with downtown businesses. The Sierra Club is working to protect wetlands threatened by this development.

In December, the town of Malta approved a new law that can require developers to preserve more open space. The Malta Planning Board Chairman was quoted as saying, "If we are going to control sprawl in Saratoga County, I think you've got to have legislation like this." At the same time, Malta is welcoming the new "Technology Campus" project that will chew up 1350 acres of Luther Forest and create further development pressures in the town. The Saratoga County Board does not seem to be as conflicted. They have threatened eminent domain proceedings in at least two instances where private property rights came into conflict with development plans.

Where do you stand? If you would like to see more of Saratoga County's rural landscape preserved, go to a town meeting and tell your officials how you feel. And don't buy the myth that "development lowers your taxes" or that "we have to increase the tax base." Your experience and mine tells us that more development means higher taxes.

If you would like to join the Sierra Saratoga Committee and work on conservation issues in Saratoga County please call me at 399-5027.

## Hudson-Mohawk Group

Chair	Pete Sheehan, 489-5803 psheeha5@nycap.rr.com
Vice-Chair	Susan Lawrence, 489-5721
Treasurer/ Membership	Clarence Gregory, 393-7100 clarence.gregory@alum.mit.edu
Secretary	Maureen Ferraro-Davis, 235-0728 maureenfd@aol.com
Conservation Chair	Roger Gray, 434-8681 rtg50@aol.com
Environmental Justice	Aaron Mair, 465-8523 aaronmair@ajej.org
Newsletter	Sarah Howard, 477-4081 showard@capital.net
Outings	Bill Koebbeman, 399-5027 WKEBB@juno.com
Political Chair	Jim Malatras, 459-6952 greek45@yahoo.com
Fundraising/ Programs/ Social Chair/ Volunteers	John Nemjo, 279-4777 Johnnemjo@aol.com

## Issue Gurus

Hudson River	Aaron Mair, 465-8523 aaronmair@ajej.org
Cascade Lakes	Roger Gray, 434-8681 rtg50@aol.com
Solid Waste/ Recycling	Clarence Gregory, 393-7100 clarence.gregory@alum.mit.edu
Energy	Jim Malatras, 459-6952 greek45@yahoo.com
Pesticides/ Clean Water	John Van Deloo, 370-4932 JVDMD@aol.com
Clean Air	Susan Lawrence, 489-5721
ANWR/ World Trade	Paul Caver, 686-7290 paulscaver@aol.com

The Hudson-Mohawk Group Executive Committee meets the first Monday evening of every month (except July). Members are encouraged to attend! Please call Pete Sheehan to confirm.

This newsletter is published 5-6 times per year (or more) by the Hudson-Mohawk Group of the Sierra Club's Atlantic Chapter. Submit all letters to the editor to: Hudson-Mohawk Group, Capitol Station, Box 7194, Albany, NY 12224, or email showard@capital.net. Include your name and phone number. We reserve the right to edit and keep all articles. Views expressed by the contributors may or may not be those of the Sierra Club or the Hudson-Mohawk Group. The subscription rate is \$5/5 issues; subscriptions for members are free. Contact John Nemjo for advertising rates.

# Membership Drive Offers Great Prizes

## Sign Up a Friend and Enter to Win

You've seen the results of the last election and perhaps feel a little insecure about how our elected officials will treat sensitive environmental issues. Wondering what to do about it?

Here is one simple thing you can do to help make our voice stronger in local, regional and national politics. SIGN UP A FRIEND for membership in the Sierra Club.

Our goal is to increase membership by 20% in the next six months. With more members, our voice becomes stronger and the environment comes out ahead.

Each time you send us a new member application, your name will be entered into the drawing for some great prizes. To enter, send your name, address and phone number to:

John Nemjo  
3695 Rt. 2  
Cropseyville, NY 12052

Be sure to include all membership fees and membership applications (you can make copies of the one in this newsletter at right). For each new member application you will receive one chance to win the prizes listed.

## Conservation Committee Organizing Meeting, 2003

**Wednesday, January 22, 7 PM**  
**Location: TBA**

We will have brief presentations of current Hudson-Mohawk Group conservation activities, followed by a discussion of plans for the coming year.

All members are welcome. Please contact committee co-chairs, Roger Gray (rtg50@aol.com), or John VanDeLoo (jvdmd@aol.com) for details.

## Grand Prize

Sign up 10 or more members and have your name entered to win a brand new **Old Town Otter Kayak**.

## Prizes

- Dinner for two at the Gingerman Restaurant
- A Hudson River Rafting Trip for two.
- A \$75 Gift Certificate to Mountainman Outdoor Supply Company.

## Membership Application:

"Every good thing, great and small, needs defense." — *Simon M. Lee*

Join today and receive a **FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag**



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Membership Categories	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

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## Volunteer Corner

**Fundraising Chair** – We need a motivated person or persons to help the local Sierra Club raise funds to carry on our important work. Projects include annual calendar drive, selling ads for our newsletter, fund appeal letters and helping with our exciting benefit bluegrass concert in June 2003.

**Publicity Chair** – Do you have a knack to getting the word out? The Sierra Club needs your help to assist us in advertising our events, programs, outings, and more.

**Programs Chair** – Person needed to arrange and conduct our monthly membership meeting and program series. Programs run from September through June.

**Newsletter Coordinator** – Donate a few hours of your time each month to help us get our newsletter from the printer and to organize our monthly labeling party.

**Newsletter Labelers** - It's just 2 to 3 hours a month but without it our members do not receive their monthly Sierra Club Newsletter. Good conversation and a chance to get your feet wet and your fingers sticky.

**Newsletter Editor** - Write articles and layout the monthly Hudson-Mohawk newsletter. A PageMaker

## Adirondack Committee to Form

The Hudson-Mohawk Group is forming a North-country Conservation Committee to deal with Adirondack and other issues in the northern extremes of our territory. If you are interested in becoming part of this working group to address more local issues in Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, Plattsburgh and surrounding areas, contact John Nemjo at (518) 279-4777. If you would like to take on a leadership role, let us know.

The Committee has a website, [www.oswegatchie.net](http://www.oswegatchie.net), which provides a detailed look at the Great Oswegatchie

template is available.

**Assistant Outings Leaders** – Help lead our trips into the great beyond. Call Bill at 399-5027.

**Environmental Education Chair**– Help the local group get its message out by taking it to the streets. Organize the local group's information and literature and take it to schools, events, Earth Day gatherings, music festivals and anywhere else that we can be heard. Have fun and meet lots of new and friendly people.

**Membership Drive Coordinator**– Organize our spring membership drive. We want to increase our membership to over 3,500 by June 2003 and we need your help.

**Concert Committee** – Help with our exciting new fundraiser, the Annual Sierra Club Bluegrass/Newgrass Festival. We need lots of volunteers to get this off the ground. It will be a lot of work but a lot more fun. This event has been very successful for other groups and the volunteers involved get a lot of personal satisfaction for running such an event. Don't miss out on this exciting project.

**To volunteer** for any of these positions or just to put your name in the hat, contact John Nemjo, Volunteer Coordinator, at 279-4777.

Canoe Wilderness campaign. This project would designate over one-half million acres as a paddling wilderness. It would be the second largest paddling destination in the lower 48 and rival Minnesota's Boundary Waters as a destination for canoe and kayak enthusiasts.

If you would like to become a part of this great project you can do so by contacting John Nemjo at 279-4777 or by attending our next North-country Conservation Committee meeting.



# Big Business Enters the Organic Marketplace

By Paul Tick

For the past 30 years, small organic farmers, coops, and other natural food stores have done an amazing job educating the public about eating well and showing the relationship between our eating habits, sustainable agriculture and the health of the planet. Now, even the most mainstream supermarkets carry natural and organic foods and people of diverse backgrounds look for them.

For over ten years now, the organic food industry has been growing by twenty percent per year. It has been the fastest growing segment of the food industry. Last year, the industry sold \$11 billion worth of organic food. While this still is only a fraction of the overall food industry, it is big enough to make the commercial giants take notice and begin investing in it. In the short run, this investment means that more organic food will get to more people because of the large scale distribution networks of big business. This however, also means that more small scale farms and small businesses are losing their share of the marketplace. The giants continue to contract with the smaller farms but they simply lower the prices they are willing to pay the farmers for their products. This endangers their independence and well-being and may mean quality compromises in the future. Decisions that were once made on the farm are now made in the boardroom with profits as the bottom line rather than our health or the health of the planet.

These days, when we shop at a coop or a natural food market, we are no longer aware of who is actually supplying our food, or that the supplier may be the same one that has been pushing cigarettes, Sugar Frosted Flakes, genetically modified foods, foods laden with pesticides, or has been endangering the environment. Some of the world's biggest companies have bought the labels of some of our most successful organic producers. The name on the product stays the same and the

labels may hardly change. Often, the new owner is not even identified on the label. Cascadian Farm and Muir Glen products, for example, now note that they are distributed by Small Planet Foods. There's no hint that Small Planet is owned by General Mills. Similarly, if you search a Terra Chips package you might find, in very small print that Terra is a division of Hain Celestial, with no

notice that Hain has been bought out by Heinz.

Fortunately, we are not helpless. With some adjusting of our shopping and organizational habits we can make a difference. Using the chart below, we can make food shopping decisions based on where our products come from and who will get our money.

<u>Label</u>	<u>True Owner</u>	<u>Concerns+</u>
Brown Cow	Hershey	International child labor, 3000 workers strike over health benefits.
Earth's Best Baby Food	Heinz	Low human rights rating,
Arrowhead Mills	Heinz	CEO earns 100x average
Hain Pure Food	Heinz	American worker, cited for
Terra Chips	Heinz	violating international baby
Garden of Eatin'	Heinz	food code, pesticides in baby
Westsoy	Heinz	foods, animal testing.
Kashi	Kellog	Boycotted for use of GMOs.*
Millstone Organic Coffee	Proctor and Gamble	Broke numerous agreements promised in NAFTA drive, animal testing, using GMOs.*
Nature's Farm Chicken	Tyson	One of 10 worst corporations, illegal dumping, workers rights, illegal payoffs to officials, etc.
Cascadian Farms	General Mills	CEO got 19 million in total
Muir Glen	General Mills	compensation in 1999, 670x average American worker, some concern re. GMOs.*
Knudsen Juices	Phillip Morris	Tobacco, alcohol, government influence, discrimination, Ethics, use of GMOs*, etc.
Quaker Oats (rice cakes)	Quaker Oats	Age discrimination, use of GMOs*, additives in animal feed.

+as noted at [www.responsibleshopper.org](http://www.responsibleshopper.org). See this website for more details about each of these companies and many more.  
\*genetically modified organisms

## Classifieds

### For Sale

**Canoes and kayaks** at great holiday prices. Over 1,000 models in stock. Free delivery to Albany area locations.

[www.mountainmanoutdoors.com](http://www.mountainmanoutdoors.com)

**Have something to sell**, a service to offer or want to send a personal message? Then place your ad here. We are accepting classified ads for our newsletter. Rates are \$20 for the first 25 words and \$3 for each additional 5 words. All ads must be received by the 15th of the month and must be paid for in advance. For more information call 279-4777.

Send ad copy and payment to:

Sierra Club Classifieds  
c/o John Nemjo  
3695 Rt. 2  
Cropseyville, NY 12052

## Wanted

### Office Space

Our local group needs an office to conduct board meetings (no more than 15 people), store campaign and educational materials, and house a local phone, computer and other office machines and supplies. If you have some available space in the Albany area and are willing to donate to help our local group in its fight to protect our environment, then please call John Nemjo at 279-4777.

### Venue for Annual Benefit Bluegrass Festival

We are looking for a location for an exciting new fundraising project for the Hudson-Mohawk Group. It is our goal to conduct an annual benefit bluegrass festival with the first event to be held in June 2003. Our event is expected to draw approximately 1,000 patrons and consist of 8-10 hours of

music by local and regional bands. We will need a location that is easy to get to, has lots of parking, is in a picturesque setting and perhaps has a covered barn or pavilion. The ideal location would be a local farm setting. This concert will be the major fundraising event for the local Sierra Club group for many years to come. Contact John Nemjo, 279-4777.

### Volunteers

Whether you have only a couple hours each month or have an interest in getting into the nitty gritty of some of our most pressing conservation issues, we need you.

Our success depends on active volunteers. Many of the jobs do not require any experience other than the willingness to spend a small amount of your free time to help us get our business in order. See page 3 for more details.



Hudson-Mohawk Group Newsletter  
Capitol Station, Box 7194  
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**Lecture Series  
Resumes  
January 14th**

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