



IROQUOIS MESSENGER

EAT LOCAL FOOD

EXCERPS FROM INFORMATION CIRCULATED BY GORDON LABEDZ

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<http://www.newyork.sierraclub.org/iroquois/index.htm>

We welcome submissions and reserve the right to edit for accuracy, brevity and clarity.

SUBMIT MESSENGER ARTICLES TO:
SIERRA.DEB@VERIZON.NET
SUBJECT LINE MUST BEGIN WITH IM-

The most significant and encouraging change in the American diet today is a growing interest in eating local food. More and more Americans are preparing meals of vegetables, fruit, meat, and other ingredients grown and raised on nearby farms, rather than from distant agribusinesses.

The Sierra Club has sponsored a short film called "The True Cost of Food," to be used as the centerpiece of a campaign to educate the public about food issues. The 15-minute animated film is a light-hearted, thought provoking video, to spur a discussion on the environmental costs of the way agribusiness is raising our food. It encourages people to buy local and organic food and eat less meat. www.truecostoffood.org.

The benefits and re-emergence of local food are documented and examined in *Eat Here: Reclaiming Homegrown Pleasures in a Global Supermarket*, a new book from the Worldwatch Institute. *Eat Here* describes how this simple shift in eating habits not only delivers superior taste, but is also better for people's health, the livelihoods of small farmers, and the global environment. The book shows how people have responded to concerns about mad cow disease, urban sprawl, and heavy pesticide use by taking control of their food supply and demanding locally grown fare. www.worldwatch.org/features/food

Here are some things you can do to promote local foods:

- ☛ Learn which local foods are in season. Build your diet around them.
- ☛ Shop at a local farmers market.
- ☛ Ask the manager of your favorite restaurant or supermarket how much of their food is locally grown. Encourage them to increase that share.
- ☛ Take a trip to a local farm to learn what it produces.
- ☛ Host a harvest party at your home or in your community that features locally available and in-season foods. Invite a local farmer to speak.
- ☛ Produce a food directory that lists all the local food sources, including CSA arrangements, farmers markets, food co-ops, restaurants offering seasonal cuisine, and farmers willing to sell direct to consumers.
- ☛ Buy extra quantities of your favorite fruit or vegetable when it is in season and experiment with drying, canning, jamming, or otherwise preserving it for a later date.
- ☛ Plant a garden and grow as much of your own food as possible.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIGEST

NATIONAL

STILL WASTING ENERGY

A group of law students and environmental organizations have sued nearly every federal agency under the Bush Administration, including the CIA and Department of Homeland Security, for flouting the Energy Policy Act (EPA) by not purchasing the legally required percentages of Alternative Fuel Vehicles for government fleets. The federal government has over 600,000 vehicles, the largest fleet in the nation complying with the Energy Policy Act, could save 1.4 billion barrels of oil every year – four times more oil than drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would provide annually.

Automotive emissions are directly linked to climate change, which is expected to severely impact animals and reduce biodiversity by altering vast habitat. The CBD recently petitioned to list the polar bear under the Endangered Species Act, in part because of the detrimental effects of global warming on polar ice.

STILL DRILLING FOR OIL

National parks may soon be catering to more than just tourists. Recent federal legislation has opened up parks designated as wilderness- the highest level of protection- to energy companies. A bill signed by President Bush sets a precedent allowing seismic testing these regions to locate oil and gas deposits. Mississippi's Gulf Islands National Seashore could be one of the first national parks subjected to such sound-wave detonations, an environmentally damaging practice that could be a precursor to oil drilling.

STATE

BOTTLE BILL

The Assembly hasn't yet voted on the "Bigger, Better Bottle Bill" (A2517A, DiNapoli/S1290A LaValle), but there are signs it will pass. It would expand the current container deposit law to include non-carbonated beverages and would also require beverage companies to return the unclaimed deposits to the state to fund recycling and other environmental protection programs.

It would also update the current law to benefit supermarkets and redemption centers by increasing the handling fee they receive from 2 cents per container to

up to 3.5 cents per container.

For over 22 years, there's been an average return rate of over 70% in New York. At the national level, states with bottle bills recycle almost 500 beverage containers per capita per year, while non-deposit states recycle fewer than 200 bottles and cans per person.

BARTON MINES WIND FARM

A proposed farm on the site of an abandoned garnet mine above North Creek has created some tough decisions for environmentalists. Most want to stop cell phone towers on mountains in the park, but to be against sustainable wind energy is a tough call. Bill McKibbin, famous for his book *The End of Nature* has written in defense of the Wind Farm. "To slow the pace of global warming will take many factors... and wind power is just one component... would be a sign of real hope for the future."

Other Adirondack groups are opposed on aesthetic grounds. Turbines would be visible from the top of Gore Mountain ski lift. The Adirondack Park Agency has a difficult task ahead. Oppose cell towers — approve wind — oppose wind?

HELP WANTED

PROGRAMS CHAIR

Plan our monthly educational programs (last Wednesday of the month). We have a list of possibilities and need someone to make the contacts. First step: programs for September, October, and November.

OUTINGS CHAIR

Pick the great places that you'd like to learn about and arrange for the Group to join you. We aim for the first weekend in the month and need plans for September, October, and November outings.

Contact: Martha Loew: 492-4745,
<mloew@twcny.rr.com>

Outdoor Programs — from page 4

SENECA LANDFILL TOUR — JUNE 11

The operators of Seneca Meadows (SM) have offered the Iroquois and Rochester Groups a tour of their facility, starting at the entrance at 10 AM. The tour will last 2 hours. We can meet for lunch afterward with the Rochester Group.

Already New York's largest landfill, SM wants to expand the operation by 75 acres. Seneca Meadows is no meadow, but a *huge* mountain of garbage, which receives waste from as far away as New York City plus the ash from the OCRRA incinerator.

Rick Marx, consulting engineer, says many up-to-date environmental controls will be used in designing the expansion, including moving Black Creek, which now flows through the property into a near-by wetland. Wetland mitigation measures are planned.

This promises to be like no other tour you have ever taken. We will drive to the top of the landfill, the highest point in the county. From there we will be able to view Montezuma Wildlife Refuge in the drainage area.

Directions: Take Exit 41 from NY Thruway (I-90). Head south on Rte. 414 for about 3 miles toward Seneca Falls. You can't miss the landfill, it's huge.

Information-492-4745

CORPORATE CHALLENGE RACE — AUGUST 2

Sierra-Iroquois Group will again recycle containers at the Syracuse Corporate Challenge Race, part of a national series of races that promote health and fitness and raise money for local charities.

The race will be held in the afternoon at Onondaga Lake Park near Griffin Stadium. About 7,000 runners will compete, not individually, but as members of corporate teams. Supporters, friends and family could increase the crowd to about 12,000.

Sierra Club's participation in this large event not only brings in funds, but also turns garbage into a resource. By wearing our Sierra Club T-shirts and hats (Each volunteer gets them) while distributing, information cards and talking to people, we'll be raising our local profile as well.

Contact Lisa Daly to help with this educational event. 428-1384

CANOE AT BEAVER LAKE — AUGUST 24

Join us for an evening canoe trip and guided tour around Beaver Lake canoe trail on Wednesday, August 24, 6:30 to 8:30 PM. Look for beaver, herons, turtles and wood ducks. No canoeing experience required. Cost \$2-\$8, depending on attendance. Sign up (also rain cancellation number): Adina Mulliken 315-428-1905, pepperballmeow@yahoo.com.

From I-81 or I-90: Take I-690 W (becomes 690 N at NYS Thruway) to second Baldwinsville exit (370 W). Proceed west on Rte. 370, 2 miles, turn right onto E. Mud Lake Rd.

COUNTING VOTES

After repeated glitches at the polls, elections officials in Miami-Dade County have recommended scrapping the county's \$24.5 million electronic voting system in favor of paper ballots with optical scanners. Supervisor of Elections Lester Sola made the recommendation Friday in an initial analysis of the county's voting system and the feasibility of adopting a new one. He said that adopting the simpler system could save county taxpayers millions and restore voter confidence by providing a paper record of ballots cast.

In New York it looks like final decision about voting machines will be up to the counties. It's unclear, however, whether that means the legislators or some other government entity. There are other undefined details about how the decision making process will actually work, and what equipment counties will have to choose from. Electronic, or "touch screen" voting as well as paper ballot with optical scanners are two options that will likely be under consideration.

NOTICE

- Event Reminder?**
- Event Postponed?**
- Event Cancelled?**

If you'd like to be kept up to date on Sierra Club meetings, join the Iroquois Messenger email update list. You'll get 2 emails a month at most. Email your name to mloew@twcny.rr.com.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

Indoor and Outdoor Sierra Club educational programs encourage us to Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet, and are **free and open to the public**.

Indoor programs are held the **last** Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM, downstairs at University United Methodist Church (UUMC), 1085 E. Genesee St. Park and enter on University Ave. Program descriptions **begin on this page**. Information 492-4745.

Outdoor programs are usually on Sundays at 2 PM at interesting locations in the Iroquois Group area. Information and cancellations: 492-4745

ExCom meetings are for Sierra members only on second Wednesdays at 7:30 PM, at the Train Station in Jamesville Plaza, corner of Route 173 and Jamesville Road. Come and bring your ideas. 492-4745.

- Jun 4 Saturday, 10 AM. **Outdoors**. Onondaga Lake Day.
- Jun 8 Wednesday, 7:30 PM ExCom
- Jun 11 Saturday, 9 AM. **Outdoors**. Seneca Landfill Tour.
- Jun 22 Wednesday, 7:00 PM **Indoors** "From Our Roots to the Summit." Plan the program for the National Sierra Summit in California. UUMC. Martha 492-4745.
- Aug 2 Tuesday, afternoon. **Outdoors**. Corporate Challenge at Onondaga Lake Park, near Griffin Stadium.
- Aug 24 Wednesday, 6:30 PM, **Outdoors**. Canoe at Beaver Lake. Sign-up: Adina Mulliken .

INDOORS

ROOTS TO THE SUMMIT – JUNE 22

Who'll decide the agenda for the first Sierra national Summit slated for September 8-11 in San Francisco? *YOU*, that's who. The process is called "From our Roots to the Summit." By June 30, all Sierra Club Groups and Chapters should finish Step One: a meeting to define needs and set priorities.

Iroquois Group will meet in the University United Methodist Church at 7:00 PM on June 22 to flesh out ideas. Janet Allen, will lead the discussion and keep the process focused. We will spend the first 15 minutes reviewing materials and finish by 9 PM. Bring a pen or pencil and a head full of ideas! To bring a non-Sierra guest with special environmental expertise, please petition Martha Loew (492-4745).

For Step Two, Sierra Club will hold an online forum in July and August to discuss ideas from the "Roots" meetings and develop the final Summit agenda. Read more at <sierrasummit2005.org>.

OUTDOORS

ONONDAGA LAKE DAY – JUNE 4

A first this year: Sierra Iroquois will host a table at the Onondaga Lake Partnership's Annual Onondaga Lake Day from 10 AM to 3 PM. Learn about the enhancement of the lake and its watershed. See how water quality, fishing, habitat and recreation can be improved. Rides, displays... It will be in a large tent by the Lake Griffin Visitor's Center, directly off Onondaga Lake Parkway. Sign up to help out or just come visit our table. Schedule at <onlakepartners.org> Becky: 436-4103.

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