The Trailblazer

The Niagara Group of The Sierra Club • http://newyork.sierraclub.org/niagara/ • Vol. 45 No. 4 Oct 2010

Chris W. Berger
Will Speak at the Niagara Group’s General Meeting

The Niagara Group will hold its general meeting on October 19 at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo, 695 Elmwood Avenue, corner of W. Ferry in Buffalo at 7:00 p.m. Chris W. Berger will present a program using Power Point for the October 19 General Meeting of the Niagara Group. His subject will be the problems with Hydrofracturing.

Chris made an outstanding presentation for the Atlantic Chapter meeting and has agreed to come to us on October 19. He is a college instructor in science, technology, and society, and owner of Horizon Enterprises. He is a Resource Management Consultant and Software Developer.

Chris lives in Whitney Point, New York.

Sen. Thompson Holds Press Conference on Hydrofracturing Moratorium

Sen. Antoine Thompson held a press conference in early August shortly after passage of S8129B, the Moratorium bill on hydrofracturing for natural gas in the Marcellus shale. The Senator singled out the Sierra Club for helping obtain some 14,000 comments to the Senate in favor of the bill, which he sponsored. Joshua Fox, the producer of the movie “Gasland” on the destruction caused by mega-hydrofracturing, was present and praised the bill as the first of its kind in the nation. The Assembly must now pass the Senate’s sister bill A11443B. Please contact your Assembly representative.

“Brushed of Birds”

Our Niagara Group held several “brushes for birds” tabling events this summer. This is where the children could “mail” a new toothbrush, along with a note, to the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary in Florida. The Sanctuary is working to help clean birds affected by the Gulf oil spill.

Carol Aik, a Sierran both in Buffalo and in Florida (as well as a volunteer for the Sanctuary) helped initiate this idea to send the supplies. Local dentists, Dr. Joseph Hyde and Dr. Michael Karmerczak generously donated new toothbrushes. SC volunteers manned a table where the children could write notes, etc. to accompany the toothbrush.

Vicky Southall, a Niagara Group member, made 2 “habitats”, one depicting a Gulf marsh area before the spill and another after (animal figurines included). These replicas expressed more than any of our words or pictures could.

It was our intention to have the children become more aware of the problems of the oil spill as well as give them -in some small way - a sense of empowerment to help.

The children’s artwork and messages were heartfelt and quite touching and will be displayed at upcoming Niagara Group tabling events.

Upcoming tabling event of the Niagara Group

The Niagara Group of the Sierra Club will have a table at the 6th Annual WNY Environmental Summit at Daemen College (Sat. Sept. 25th 8:30 AM-12:30 PM)

Time for Sierrans to vote for 2010 Executive Committee Members

NIAGARA GROUP official ballots

IMPORTANT: Single memberships, use one ballot.
Joint memberships, use both ballots.
Ballots must be received by December 1, 2010

ELECTION INSTRUCTIONS
To be eligible to vote in this election, you must have been a member in good standing of the Niagara Group as verified by a members mailing label. Please read all the candidate statements on pages 2. Indicate your choices by checking the boxes next to the candidates names on the ballot. Each member may fill out only one ballot. Joint members use both ballots.
Please detach this page and mail your ballot(s) to the address below in an ordinary letter size envelope, provided with the proper postage.
Send your ballot(s) to:
2008 Niagara Group Elections Committee
C/o Virginia Snider • PO Box 371, Williamsville, NY 14231
*Ballots must be received on or before 12/01/10*

Testimony for A Future

I began this article to respond to recent negative reactions to the wind turbines in Lakes Erie and Ontario. But as I did preliminary research I realized our problem is that we are absent any national comprehensive energy policy. American energy mostly means ensuring the cheapest gas and electricity are available. I will develop a subsequent article about the true cost of energy. This article is a brief survey of the current American Energy Policy (or lack thereof). I hope to arouse anger. We environmental folk deplore but fail to combat energy programs that mostly promote personal laziness, mortgage our profligacy and burden future generations with waste. Our current national energy program does all three.

The energy business is confident that energy is a profit/loss business equation, which ignores the long-term impacts of wasteful energy on the future. One successful energy development was in Ontario, Canada, which among many strategies recently legislated Feed-in-Programs by which entrepreneurs can develop alternate energy like wind turbines or solar panels and are guaranteed, by law, a fair market price for the energy they produce. This means you can take a good idea and business plan to a bank and they have a reasonable basis to lend you development capital. Naturally some former New York alternate energy developers are already in Toronto.

World wide we are in the hottest decade, the hottest year and the hottest summer in human history. One rea...

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Niagara Group Election Biographies

Please read the following biographies of the candidates.

Angela Knisley

I have been a member of the Sierra Club Niagara Group’s executive committee since January ’08 when I have been assisting with the membership needs of the group. My activities with the club include working with the organization’s online database system (HELEN) which helps with member communication. I also work on community events to promote our club’s goals and mission through general member meetings and educational “tabling” activities.

Art Klein

My life is just about parallel to the development of the modern environmental movement. From 1957 to 1990 I worked on the Great Lakes, in conservation, research and finally as Project Manager for the Great Lakes Water Quality Investigator for the Corps of Engineers. I witnessed the degradation and pollution of our Great Lakes and later the feeble responses to this. In about 1990, to Blake Reeves, I expressed my frustration over the lack of realization of the seriousness of the problem by the nation. He brought me into the Sierra Club for relief of my anguish.

I was a Waterways Investigator in the Corps of Engineers from 1957 to 1990. During this period, I have attended the possibleities and limitations of Government in regulating the waterways and wetlands.

I am an active participant in outdoor recreation and advocacy.

My Sierra involvements: Great Lakes water quality, the Niagara Greenway effort, wetlands, urban sprawl, open space and forest and park policies, and transportation issues.

I have learned the value of our Niagara Group efforts. Many of these results and rationales are presently underway and will be complete in about a year. It is true. You do. That’s partly because we have a pretty good working crew on board. But we are looking for new people and fresh ideas. If you want to pitch in and help, come to our Niagara Group ex-com meetings at 7 pm in Dun Scotus Hall, Daemen College, and second floor on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

As for my biography I write about environmental conservation because of my interests in the Club’s Executive Committee. My favorite subjects are Niagara River Greenway preservation, the restoration of the JN Adam Hospital and forest at Perrysburg, Allegany State Park’s Master Plan, the new State Park in the Marcellus shale and the Erie County Forest. I also hope to continue to represent you at the quarterly Atlantic (NY State) Chapter Ex-com meetings which feature a free lunch.

Our Group and Chapter ex-com meetings are open to all members. Come and help out.

Bob Ciesielski

Bob Ciesielski has served on the Executive Committee of the Niagara Group since 2004. I was Secretary of the organization for two years and have acted as Chair of the Executive Committee since 2007. In working with wonderful ExCom members and club volunteers, we have expanded our involvement in the Buffalo Urban Forest, the Buffalo Niagara Greenway, and many other related projects.

We have gathered slightly over 2000 signatures of individuals on paper petitions and over 1200 extra names there today—and if your name is one of those “disappeared” ones we believe it is legitimate for you to re-sign.

We are asking Sierrans to please join us in this effort as individuals, to encourage family members, friends, and others to sign the online petition (which can be mailed to you at your convenience) so that your voices can be counted—and heard: there is the opportunity there to make a comment. Please feel free to do so. If each of you made a pledge to convince just one other (or even two others to vote), the winds would change. If you have questions, please email me at exbaxter@oad.com and I will do my best to answer them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Happy trails,

Bob Baxter

Tim Tielman

Tim Tielman was the executive director of the Campaign for Greater Buffalo History, Architecture & Culture in the Buffalo Niagara Greenway, an active conservation, all steps we must take for survival.

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for more news, archives, and upcoming events, visit
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