



The Sierra Log

Newsletter of the Anne Arundel County Group of the Sierra Club, Maryland Chapter

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Activists Honored at Annual Dinner Bay Discussed

David Prosten

More than 100 Anne Arundel Sierra Club members and guests gathered in Annapolis January 24 to mark the club's 25th anniversary, sharing a great potluck meal, hearing a dramatic presentation about the health, and future, of the Chesapeake Bay, and honoring two founding members.

The honors were for longtime Anne Arundel Sierra Club activists Joan and Cliff Willey, who will be leaving the area later in the year. Joan especially, has been a tireless club activist at every level of leadership in the county, state and the national organization.

The presentation on the state of the Bay was by Gerald Winegrad, a former state legislator and now professor at the University of Maryland. His talk was sobering, suggesting that only dramatic governmental intervention at this point can save the iconic estuary (see related story).

The tribute to the Willeys was aided by a slide presentation showing Joan and Cliff participating in club activities over the years, from hiking in the mountains to lobbying in Washington, D.C. and Annapolis. The show was compiled by executive committee member Thomas Higdon, from photos collected from friends and various publication archives.

Speaker after speaker rose to praise Joan, especially, for her service over the years as chair of both the Anne Arundel group and the Maryland Chapter of the club, also accepting several assignments from the national Sierra Club, which is based in San Francisco. Many current Chapter leaders attended the dinner and joined in the praise, as did regional club officials and others. Among those at the dinner and speaking was John Cochran, who along with Joan, was a founding member of the Anne Arundel group.

Among other parting gifts, Joan and Cliff were presented with his-and-her snowshoes: they're moving to Maine. Local artist and club member Deede Miller presented the couple with a painting of a black-capped chickadee, the Maine state bird – which, wisely, winters in Maryland. Liz Vanden Heuvel gave them a scrapbook of messages of love and appreciation from other club activists.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped organize and run the dinner, and the dozens of participants who brought along pot-luck favorites, making the evening a huge success.

Winegrad Speaks – Club Hears Bleak Assessment of Bay’s Future

David Prosten

The Chesapeake Bay is in deadly serious trouble despite decades of sporadic efforts to clean it up, renowned environmental activist and scholar, Gerald W. Winegrad, told a Sierra Club audience in January. He said nothing short of major, dramatic land use reform and severe restrictions on farm runoff will begin to turn the tide.

Winegrad, whom the Washington Post identified as the “environmental conscience” of the Maryland Senate during his years of service in the legislature, was the featured speaker at the Anne Arundel Sierra Club’s 25th anniversary celebration, January 24. More than 100 participants heard his sobering assessment of the Bay’s future.



Photo by Cathy Ford

Senator Winegrad, a professor at the University of Maryland graduate School of Public Policy, spoke on: “What needs to be done to restore the Bay? The inconvenient truths of Bay restoration.” With recent media reports detailing the failures of the stalled and ineffective programs that were supposed to be bringing the Bay back to health, the presentation was more important, and timely, than ever.

With a slide show presentation Winegrad educated the audience about the steadily declining state of the Bay: fewer crabs, almost no oysters, declining fish populations, huge zones of insufficient oxygen to support life, murky water.

Past efforts to bring back the Bay have failed, he said. At best, efforts have kept things from being a lot worse... but they are simply not enough to repair the damage already done. Stronger, more aggressive action is needed.

Every individual has the responsibility to help, he said, but individual concern alone is not enough. Until meaningful policies controlling land use, forest preservation, development, and farm runoff (especially chicken farming) are developed and enforced, the future is grim.

Winegrad, who grew up in Annapolis, spoke for nearly an hour as he ran through his slide program, and the audience sat rapt. He fielded questions for another half-hour after the talk, which followed the group’s pot-luck dinner at Calvary United Methodist Church in Annapolis.

Homeport Farm Park

Liz Vande Hovel

Plans for Homeport Farm Park are moving along - albeit a little slowly due to all the varied interests and government issues involved. Several people have responded to efforts to look for assistance with a reforestation effort on the part of the Sierra Club. We now have several sources for trees and a few volunteers to do the hard part. Right now we are waiting for some further guidance on how and where to get started.

There will be access for non-motorized boats there and the considerations for this access were the subject of the last meeting's discussion. The need is to provide water access without harming the shoreline. There are some choices to be made about the best way to do this. Also under consideration is whether or not crabbing and fishing will be allowed and how that would work environmentally.

Your ideas and thoughts are welcome. I am representing the Sierra Club on this advisory committee and, therefore, I am representing you. We could also use additional volunteers!

Contact Liz at liz2vh@olg.com or call 410-267-9009.

Calendar of Events

Sierra Club Outings are open to all members and non-members.

All outings begin at the trailhead. In the interests of conservation and convenience, the Sierra Club encourages carpooling to outings from the meeting place. However, the carpool is not part of the actual outing, and the Sierra Club assumes no liability for it. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. A modest driver reimbursement, if any, can be arranged between the driver and passengers.

Reservations are not necessary for outings unless so stated. In order to participate in one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please call 415-977-5630 or see the website:

[www.sierraclub.org/outings/
chapter/forms/](http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/)

For general information about the local club, call David Prosten at 410-263-6341.

Ex-Comm Meetings—

The Executive Committee meets on the second Thursday of every month, except August and December, in Room 114 at Calvary United Methodist Church on Rowe Blvd in Annapolis. All are welcome — bring a friend! 6:30 pm.

Newsletter Deadline — Friday, May 15

For the June/July issue. Call 410-224-3384 or email patchurch@comcast.net.

Saturday, April 4 – Easy Hike –Soldiers Delight

Meet at Millersville Park and Ride; leave promptly at 9:00am. Join the Sierra Club for an easy 5.2 mile hike at Soldiers Delight Natural Environmental Area in Owings Mills. The serpentine grassland and ecosystem were part of the "Great Maryland Barrens", which stretched from the Potomac River into Pennsylvania. "Barren" referred to the lack of timber, not the lack of tree species. The area shows evidence of recent fires (cause unknown), but still offers a pleasant hike with small hills. If you are comfortable walking five miles, you should be able to accomplish this hike easily. Bring a snack/lunch and water. Please email Nicki at cybertrax1@netzero.net for directions, and put "Soldiers Delight" in the subject line.

Saturday, April 11 – Hike The Cascade and Buzzard Rock

Moderate 5.7 mile hike within the Patapsco State Park, vertical rise 780 feet, about a three hour hike. The hike will take us across a swinging bridge where we'll find the remnants of the Orange Grove Flour Mill, operated from the mid 1800s until it burned down in 1905. We'll hike beside tumbling streams and along quiet hillsides and take a rest break next to a small waterfall. Bring a snack/lunch and water. Depart the Millersville Park and Ride 9:00 am. Contact Jan at jhoff2370@verizon.net with "Cascade" in the subject line.

Saturday, April 18 – Earth Day Celebration and 5K Race

See details and entry form for the race on page 7.

Saturday, April 25 – Leisurely Spring Paddle

Paddle on the Tuckahoe River on the Eastern Shore about an hour from Annapolis. See what's blooming and see how the river is faring after low rainfalls. We will start at Hillsboro and paddle upriver - a fairly easy feat. We will be on the water for up to 3 hours and have lunch. Contact Liz at liz2vh@olg.com or by phone at 410-267-9009 to sign up.

Saturday, May 2 – Hike Sugar Loaf Mountain

Meet at Millersville Park and Ride; leave promptly at 8:00 am. Join the Sierra Club for a moderate hike at Stronghold Properties Sugarloaf Mountain. We start at the bottom of the mountain, and work our way up to the summit for breathtaking views of the valley below. This is a circuit hike and ends back at the lower parking area. Sugarloaf Mountain is known as a monaduck, a mountain that survives the erosion of the surrounding land. The mountain is home to many species of trees and plants, including wildflowers. Hiking boots are recommended. You should be able to easily walk 8 miles at a moderate pace, and capable of hiking steep hills and switchbacks - this is not a beginner's hike. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Please email Nicki at cybertrax1@netzero.net for directions, and put "Sugarloaf" in the subject line.

Saturday, May 9 – Eastern Shore Paddle Trip

Spend the day before Mother's Day exploring a creek new to us, on Still Pond Creek near Worton, on the Eastern Shore. Let's see how they use their shoreline and what plants and animals or fish we can find. This creek empties into the Bay. We may be able to visit an Art Studio near the put-in. Contact Liz at liz2vh@olg.com or at 410-267-9009 for more information or to sign up.

(Continued on next page)

Calendar of Events *(Continued from previous page)*

Saturday, May 30 – Hike Chimney Rocks, Michaux State Forest, Pennsylvania

Hike 6.6 miles within the state forest and along parts of the Appalachian Trail. There is an elevation change of over 1,000 feet and most of this change is within a short distance, and is a little strenuous. The wild azaleas and mountain laurel should be in bloom. The return back down the mountain will give us a break as we hike along an unimproved road and then follow the Tumbling Run creek downhill. Hiking shoes/boots are recommended. Bring water and lunch. Depart the Millersville Park and Ride promptly at 8:00 am (it is an 88 mile ride to get there.) Contact [Jan at jhoff2370@verizon.net](mailto:Jan_at_jhoff2370@verizon.net) for information with "Chimney Rocks" in the subject line.

BioBlitz: Patuxent River Park May 2009

Together, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's (M-NCPPC) Patuxent River Park Staff and Park Rangers are co-hosting the 2009 BioBlitz at Jug Bay Natural Area at Patuxent River Park in Upper Marlboro, on the Prince George's County side of Jug Bay. The event will take place from noon on Saturday May 30 until noon on Sunday May 31.

The Patuxent River Park BioBlitz will occur over a 24-hour period where scientists of various disciplines will offer their expertise to gain a snapshot of the flora, fauna, and other elements within the parkland. In addition to an information gathering opportunity, this BioBlitz will serve as an educational tool for volunteers, a promoter of scientific awareness, a networking opportunity for experts and staff, and a chance to have fun in the field. The objectives are to:

- Estimate Species Richness. Identify and catalog as many species of flora and fauna as possible in this unique, multi-habitat ecosystem, including native and non-native species.
- Foster Partnerships. Build upon the collective knowledge of the Maryland Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve's staff and its partners, regarding this designated reserve area.
- Education. Add to M-NCPPC staff's repertoire of knowledge in order to better educate the public regarding what lives and thrives within Jug Bay at Patuxent River Park.
- Park/Scientist/Volunteer Bridge Building. Offer the park staff, ranger staff, experts, and volunteers a chance to network, collaborate, and connect in their common environmental interests.

Refreshments and camping at no cost will be provided to experts/volunteers who would like to stay overnight! Jug Bay is a site of The Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Maryland. The park features habitat diversity, wide flora and fauna diversity, and over 10 miles of hiking trails that will be used as access points for surveying. Experts from USGS, Smithsonian, USDA, NOAA, Anne Arundel County Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County Parks and Recreation, and many others are among those invited.

We hope you will join us! As an expert in your field, we believe you will offer a valuable service for this event. Feel free to invite fellow experts and pass along our contact information.

RSVP to Erica Hahn, Park Ranger, Natural and Historical Resources Division, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 14955 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772. Phone 301-203-6079, or email Erica.Hahn@pgparks.com.

Patuxent Sojourn: Exploring and Restoring – June 18 - 22

Liz Vanden Hewel

The Patuxent Sojourn is about ready to go. Registrations will soon be available. Check your calendar for the time between June 18-22, and see if you can join us, even for just a day. We'll be doing some paddling and a lot of exploring streams, archaeology, flora and fauna in the Jug Bay area, and restoration activities, such as planting wild rice or removing invasive plants. We will have good food, contra dancing, educational talks and great company. Contact Liz at liz2vh@olg.com or at 410-267-9009 for further information.

15th Annual Sierra Club "Earth Day 5K" Set for Annapolis, April 18

Runners, walkers and friends of the environment from throughout the area are gearing up for one of the year's most fun racing events: the Anne Arundel Sierra Club's Earth Day 5K Race and Walk at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. Aside from being fun, the event is the Club's only annual fundraising event. Runners and walkers alike agree that the course, through the Park's 350 lush green acres off the South River, is one of the most attractive on the circuit, and prizes and gifts to the participants, provided by the Sierra Club and local race sponsors, are fun and many.

The race takes place Saturday, April 18, with registration between 7:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m., and the race at 8:30 a.m. There is a \$20 runner registration fee by April 6, \$25 on the day of the race.

Generous refreshments are available to all runners. Admission to the park is free for all Earth Day activities. All participants receive an "Earth Day 5K" T-shirt; runners are eligible to win plaques and medallions in several categories. Every entrant is eligible for post-race drawings that offer hundreds of dollars in goodies that typically include meals from area restaurants, Orioles tickets, health club passes, kayak rentals, ice cream cones, gourmet coffees, outdoor gear, and more. Two hundred runners participated last year. As in 2008, there will be a "chip" timing system, provided by runannapolis.com, that will allow quicker time postings for the serious runners.

Leashed dogs are invited to participate. Supporters of the club who'd like to contribute to the event, but don't want to run or walk, are still invited to contribute and get a T-shirt and be eligible for the post-race giveaways.

Participants can pre-register by filling out the accompanying form and sending it in with their entrance fee. You can contact Race Coordinator David Prosten at 410-703-0847.

Sponsored by



Earth Day Race & Walk - 5 kilometers (3.1 miles)

Saturday, April 18, 2009

Quiet Waters Park, Annapolis, Maryland

7:00-8:15 a.m. (Registration) 8:30 a.m. (Race & Walk)

BENEFIT: Proceeds to benefit the *Anne Arundel County Sierra Club's Environmental Work*
AWARDS: *Refreshments and T-shirts* to all entrants (T-shirts may be mailed to late registrants)
Plaque to top 3 in Men's and Women's Open. *Medallions* to age group winners.
Drawings for great prizes open to all participants, runners and walkers alike.

FOR INFORMATION CALL: David (410-703-0847)

ENTRY FEE: \$20 (before April 6), \$25 (on race day)

COUCH POTATO FEE: *I can't participate, but I want to support the club's work, so am enclosing a donation. I understand that if I come to the race, I'm eligible for the prize drawings)*

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: *Sierra Club, A.A. County*

SEND CHECK AND APPLICATION TO: Sierra Club Race & Walk, PO Box 3620, Annapolis, MD 21403

Sex: M____ F____ T-shirt size: S____ M____ L____ XL____ Age _____ (on race day)

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

E-mail address _____

In consideration of the acceptance of this event, I waive all claims for myself, my heirs and assigns against the hosts, sponsors or promoters for injury or illness which may result from my participation. I further state that I am in proper physical condition to compete in this race.

Signature _____ Date _____

If under 18, parent or guardian must also sign.) _____



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K&B "Green" Hardware Store Marks Earth Day

A "green" Annapolis hardware store will mark Earth Day by distributing 1,000 free Douglas Fir tree saplings, showcasing more than 1,000 "earth-friendly" products, and offering other environmental activities and events.

K&B True Value, at 912 Forest Drive, will mark Earth Day at the store April 18-19. K&B is a longtime supporter of the Sierra Club's Earth Day Race and Walk in Quiet Waters Park (April 18, see story) and other environmental groups. Other activities at the store over the weekend, will include a raffle to benefit the Chesapeake Bay foundation, and a signing by Sierra Club activist and author Susan Hartsfield of her book, "[The Complete Guide to Energy Conservation for Smarties.](#)"

"K&B True Value offers cost-effective earth-friendly products that perform equal to or better than comparable products," says co-owner Jared Littmann. "We added many products since last year's celebration, like rain barrels, compost bins and crocks, and Mrs. Meyer's cleaners, to go with expanded categories in organic lawn care and natural household cleaners. We are the only fertilizer retailer in the City of Annapolis, and can help you comply with the new non-phosphorous fertilizer regulations." The store will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. over the celebration weekend.