

Spring Events to Motivate You!

Earth Day Service Event

Saturday, May 4
10 a.m.

Kensington Metropark

Let's celebrate this 32nd Earth Day anniversary at Kensington Metropark by literally weeding Nature's Gardens. Bring the family, wear sturdy boots and bring work gloves to help remove some of the invasive weeds that are taking over this pristine natural area near the Nature Center. Take I-96 to exit 151, (Kensington Rd.) to park entrance. Meet your fellow weeders at the Nature Center at 10am. There will be a potluck lunch afterwards (bring a dish to pass) at the East Boat Launch picnic grounds.

Contact:
Bob Duda, 734-464-0076

April 23 Lobby Day.

Join the SEMG Political Committee for Lobby Day in Lansing. This is an excellent chance to meet your state legislators and influence positive environmental decisions. Details can be found on page 12.

May 19. Help improve Lake St. Clair and its shoreline! Seeking volunteers to clean up parks, the shoreline and beaches. Certified scuba divers, boaters and people with personal watercraft are in particular demand.

Presented by Advanced Aquatics Diving, Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund and the Nautical Mile Association, and sponsored by We Are Here Foundation.

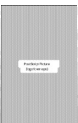
For information or to pre-register with Clean Water Action: call 810-783-8900, FAX 810-783-4033 email metrodetroit@cleanwater.org.

Please note this is not a Sierra Club function. This announcement is published in the Activist in the belief that it will be of interest to Sierrans in Southeast Michigan.



Sierra Club Activist
Southeast Michigan Group
17610 Warrington Dr.
Detroit MI 48221-2769

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A CTIVIST

MARCH/AUGUST 2002 GROUP VOLUME 20 ISSUE 6

Detroit Residents Air Concerns about Incinerator Pollution and Health Risks

by Ed McArdle,
SEMG Conservation
Co-Chair

Surely you have seen the monster. The largest incinerator in the U.S., capable of processing 3,600 tons of garbage per day, is visible from the junction of I-75 and I-94, a giant stack spewing its dragon's breath of steam vapor and pollutants over the city. Sierra Club's SEMG and the Mackinac Chapter have a long history of intense opposition to this facility. In 1987, along with many other groups, we demonstrated and lobbied to oppose its construction. When that failed, we engaged in a seven-year lawsuit, first to force the authorities to install what at the time were "state of the art" pollution controls and then to require the City of Detroit to recycle. We were successful in getting the new scrubber/ baghouse filters put in, but there is still virtually no recycling in Detroit except for the magnet that pulls out metal in front of the incinerator's furnaces.

The updated controls are effective,



Jackie Victor (right) voices her concerns as a resident and business owner in the neighborhood at the February 18 public hearing hosted by local politicians. Here she speaks to DEQ Engineer Thomas Maza, Lillian Woolley, Wayne County Commissioner Jewel Ware and State Representative Mary Waters. Photo: Ed McArdle.

but the incinerator's huge size means that it can still emit over 2,000 tons per year of toxic metals, acid gases and numerous hazardous chemicals including mercury and diox-

... continued on page 10

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General Membership Meetings

General membership meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month unless otherwise noted. There are no meetings during the summer recess, July and August.

7:00-7:30 Social Time

7:30-8:00 Business Meeting

8:00-9:00 Program

All meetings are held at the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church at 23925 Northwestern Hwy., southbound service drive, between Southfield and Evergreen Rd., and 9 and 10 Mile Rd., in Southfield. Light refreshments are served.



Schedule of Programs

April 4. SEMG Enviro-Fair. Join us for the second annual SEMG-sponsored showcase of local environmental groups. We'll spend the evening learning about local environmental activities and issues. Representatives from numerous groups will be available to answer questions, pass out literature and speak about their organizations. For a partial list of the groups, see pages 8-9. Come prepared to learn and find ways you can get involved in important environmental work in southeast Michigan.

May 2. Backyard Ecology. Conservation Co-Chair Mary LaFrance and MSU Wayne Co. Extension staff Kristine Hahn will be discussing how to make your back and front yards more ecologically sound while enhancing their beauty. See page 8 for more details.

June 6. Greenways Initiative. Tom Woiwode, Greenways Director, will present plans to link communities in SE Michigan through the construction of greenways, build the capacity of organizations responsible for greenways development, and acquaint people with the benefits of greenways to their communities.

Executive Committee Meetings

The Executive Committee meets the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Royal Oak Senior Citizen's Center, 3500 Marais in Royal Oak. No meeting in August.

Conservation Committee

The Conservation Committee meets monthly at the Royal Oak Community Senior Citizens Center, 3500 Marais, Royal Oak. For more information call Mary LaFrance, 734-282-6935, or Ed McArdle, 313-388-6645.

Political Committee Meetings

The Political Committee meets the last Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Jimi's Restaurant on Washington, 1 block north of Lincoln (10-1/2 Mile) in Royal Oak.

+ + + +

The *Activist* is circulated to subscribers and new members three times a year and to all Group members the last two issues of the year. It is printed on recycled paper.

Comments Sought in FDA Review of the Risks of Genetically Engineered Fish

Submitted by SEMG
Conservation Chair Mary LaFrance

A campaign underway by the Center for Food Safety is to collaborate with as many folks as they can while the public docket for rule making is still available with the FDA. The Center took legal action in May 2001 by filing a legal petition with the FDA for rule making on the environmental and human health risks of genetically engineered (GE) fish. It took such action knowing that the Agency was beginning its review of the first GE fish, the GE Atlantic Salmon. According to the Center, this variety of farmed fish already has environmental and health risks associated — even without the novel genes to make it grow 10-30 times as fast. It is apparent to many scientists, fishermen, and others who care about sustainable fishing that the risks posed to the environment, human health, and wild fish catcheries by the introduction of GE fish are serious.

As the agency is accepting comments, the Center is reaching out to a broad and diverse body of business owners, including fish suppliers and distributors, chefs and restaurant owners. The Center believes that active involvement by the public in this

campaign would bear weight in the FDA's rule making process.

S Contact: Juliana Jones,
Center for Food Safety,
660 Pennsylvania Ave SE,
Suite 302,
Washington, DC, 20003,
202-547-9359
jjones@icta.org.

Subscription Form

ACTIVIST

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I don't want to miss out on the *ACTIVIST*!
Enclosed is my \$5 (please send check for your own protection) to receive the next four issues through the mail. Thank you!

N a m e

A d d r e s s

C i t y

State /

New members . . . of the Club in our Southeast Michigan (SEMG) area receive one issue of the *Activist* as part of our "Welcome to the Group" policy. The current issue is sent to everybody who was new in the rolls November 1 to March 1 period. To continue receiving the *Activist*, please subscribe for \$5 a year using the form above.

Contribute to the *Activist* Articles, activities, announcements, photos and ads of general interest to the membership are welcome. Send items to **Lydia Fischer, 17610 Warrington Dr., Detroit, MI 48221**. If possible supply a computer disc, IBM-compatible or Macintosh format; always include a hard copy.

Deadlines for publication are Feb. 28, July 31 and Oct. 31.

And let us know what you think of the newsletter, either by writing to the address in the *Activist* subscription form, or by calling Lydia at 313-863-8392.

Are you interested in participating in the club's committee activities? You are encouraged to contact the individuals listed below. Get involved! It's your chance to make a difference in the quality of life you endorsed when you joined the Sierra Club. Volunteer an hour or two a month — that's all it takes. Remember, good ideas work when we do!

SEMG Executive Committee and Committee Chairs

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 Chair and Political Committee Chair
 timk@bikerider.com

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 471-3759
 Vice Chair, nashlibdem@msn.com

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 (313) 562-1873
 Outings Committee Chair,
 Advertising Manager

Join the Sierra Club Today!

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

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag



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 Please charge my Mastercard Visa
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 Card Number _____

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 \$750 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.



SIERRA CLUB
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What's going on

by Tim Killeen,
SEMG Chair

The New Year brings changes on the Executive Committee. We have several new members: Carol Izant, Cadey Sontag, Jim Nash and (for a return visit) Gene Perrin. Sadly we say goodbye to Anna Holden who faithfully served on the ExCom for many years. She will, however, continue to be an integral part of our Conservation Committee. These changes on the ExCom have brought us talented individuals who will help to keep the local group moving forward.

As your new Chair I will consistently be encouraging the grassroots nature of our Club. We have 7,000 members in SE Michigan, and the strength of our Group lies in many folks doing a little rather than a few doing a lot. This column will keep you apprised of the issues that the ExCom is facing so you can get a good picture of how the Group functions.

Finances/Fundraising. SEMG operates on a \$12,000 annual budget. Nearly half goes to support this publication (more on this later.) The rest of the funds are used to rent meeting space, provide funds for our committees, and general administration such as postage. It's very expensive to reach 7,000 members when we need to get out information on conservation and/or political issues. Regular communication is vital in building the strength of the Group.

Because money is tight, several of the Group leaders swallow some out-of-pocket costs that should be reimbursed. Costs should not have to be eaten by a member if she or he wants to be an activist. These costs should be shared. For example, we now have five area codes within our Group boundaries. Tolls can add up quickly if you make a dozen phone

calls. To that end we will be looking at ways to raise an additional \$2,000 this year. Your support of fundraising efforts is a vital contribution. Volunteers will be more encouraged to participate if they are not expected to bear a financial burden.

Website. SEMG is now on the web at michigan.sierraclub.org/semg. Bookmark the site. This will be a good way to stay up on Group activities, including Outings.

The Activist. As mentioned, this publication takes the lion share of our budget. We had been publishing four issues a year. Two issues would go to the entire membership, and the other two would only go to new members since the last mailing and to those who sent in their \$5 subscription. The Board has decided to publish three issues this year with two of them going to the full membership. We have a goal to publish three issues next year to send to the entire membership. This way we actually reach more of our members, albeit less frequently. One way to support this publication is to send in your \$5 subscription. Along with other fundraising efforts, this will allow us to support the wonderful publication you're holding in your hands. We do sell ad space and are in need of volunteers to help. Phil Crookshank has done a wonderful job but there is only so much one volunteer can do.

Group Elections. Less than 1% of the membership participated in our ExCom elections last fall. The Ex Com is going to take a careful look at how we conduct our elections and seek ways to increase member participation. Grassroots participation is the bedrock of the Club.

As you peruse these pages you will see that we have many wonderful folks working hard to explore, enjoy and protect the planet. Find your niche in the Group's ecosystem described in these pages. This kind of biodiversity will help the larger environment that we all care about so much.

Thank you, SEMG Champions!

These individual and business Champions actively support local communication, outreach and education efforts of the Southeast Michigan Group.

Individual Champions

- William Bau
- H.L. Bedingfield
- Joanne Cantoni
- Bob Duda
- Lydia Fischer
- Cindy Gunnip
- Rankin S. Henry
- Shana Herrin
- Virginia Hiber
- Tim Killeen
- Dawn Livingston
- Gene Perrin
- Adele Saunders
- John Shaheen
- Cadey Sontag
- Harold Stokes
- Rosa Tinetti

Business Champions

MapleCreek Farm
Michelle and Danny Lutz
Certified Organic CSA
810-387-4365
www.maplecreekfarm.com

The Benchmark
Outdoor Outfitters
32715 Grand River Ave.
Farmington, MI 48336
248-477-8116

Is it time to renew your subscription? Take a few moments to complete the Subscription Form on page 15. Just \$5 will keep you informed and involved in the Group's activities through the voice of the *Activist*, published three times a year. Thank you very much for your support.

Won't you help?

This newsletter is the voice and chronicle of the Group. It keeps you informed about important conservation campaigns and opportunities for involvement. It's your program guide to our fun and challenging outings. It informs you of political issues and opportunities to influence changes in environmental legislative policies.

SEMG needs your help to be able to continue to print and mail the newsletter to the full membership twice a year. One copy of this issue costs more than 50 cents to print and mail -- in addition to many volunteer hours.

This is an easy way to offer your support to the Group in its mission to explore, protect and enjoy the planet. Fill out the form below, and we will add you to our list of Champions.

As a bonus, you'll receive a one-year subscription to the *Activist*.

There are two ways to be a Champion: Individual Champion (\$25) or Business Champion (\$50). Business Champions may include telephone number, street address and email address in the listing.

Individual Champion (\$25; includes 1-year subscription)

Hikers and Stargazers Explore Mystery of Maybury's Nighttime Aura

by Ed McArdle,
SEMG Conservation Co-Chair

As dusk deepened to dark last February 9, about twenty hikers gathered in the muddy parking lot of Maybury State Park for the annual SEMG winter's night hike. Maybury State Park, located just west of Northville, is a great place in the daylight – with miles of trails, paved and dirt roads over rolling terrain that are closed to auto traffic but just right for biking and hiking. There is even a working 19th century farm with all the resident animals located at the main north entrance to the park. But, it is at night when the park takes on a special aura. Thanks go to park manager, Scott Herrington, for making special arrangements to leave the Beck Rd. gate open for us after the park had officially closed.

After introductions by flashlight, we proceeded into the park interior. Although the weather was unusually warm even by global warming standards, there was good snow cover in the forest and on the trails. At night the snow reflects a beaming glow among the trees; watching the stars between the tree branches gave us a sense of mystery and timelessness. At the first stop, stargazers and amateur astronomers Melton French and John Herrgott pointed out planets and constellations riding in the night sky. After everyone caught up, we resumed our journey to the sound of boots crunching over snow. At the next stop, we asked for silence while I called for the Barred Owl. After several hoots, we finally heard an answer, but it sounded more like we had awakened several distant dogs. Oh well... the night walk was still very special as we enjoyed being somewhere truly different from

where our everyday lives take us. We looped back to the parking lot after 2 to 3 miles of vigorous walking.

The only negative of the night came as we spotted the lights from the "bigfoot" million dollar new homes that are being built right up to the park's west fence line. Unfortunately, Maybury is in the path of hyper-urban sprawl. Coming on the heels of such perfect experience with nature, many of us felt a renewed determination to continue our fight for preserving the environment for the next generations.

Afterward, some of us met at a local pub to warm up over good food and talk of other journeys past and future, a perfect closure to a wonderful evening.



SEMG Elects Ex-Com Members

Newly-elected Executive Committee members for the Southeast Michigan Group are: Carol Izant, Jim Nash, Eugene Perrin, Cadey Sontag and Barbara Yarrow. The five members will serve two years from January 2002 to December 2003. Gloria Scicli was appointed to the board to fill an unexpired term.

Green Politics

by Jim Nash,
SEMG Political Committee

Let's Get Involved

The Political Committee is gearing up for a very active election year. We have already started the endorsement process in several races, and are seeking input on our endorsements for later in the electoral season.

SEMG will be active in many races

The Governor's race offers us an opportunity, after 12 dismal years, to help elect an administration that cares about Michigan's environmental future. Last October, all gubernatorial candidates were invited to participate in a forum at our monthly membership meeting. Those who attended, Sen. Gary Peters, Sen. Alma Wheeler Smith and former Gov. James Blanchard (Cong. David Bonior was represented by an aide), showed considerable knowledge and commitment to the environment. We will be deciding on an endorsement in the coming months. The Committee is also discussing its strategy for the state legislative races. We will be looking at where our help might make the most difference, and how we can best help our candidates win. As always, we encourage our members' participation.

Successful Lobby Days to continue

Here's a good chance to do a good deed for the environment and have a satisfying political experience. We're planning the next Lobby Day in Lansing on Tuesday, April 23. Please help! You'll have to commit to (1) one evening meeting about two weeks

before Lobby Day to get prepped on the issues; then (2) gather early on Lobby Day for traveling to Lansing where we want to arrive by 8:30 a.m. We'll visit legislators, have a debriefing and be back in the Metro area by 5 p.m. at the latest.

Contact Carol Izant at 248-352-6137, cogknot@yahoo.com, or Dan Keifer 248-652-1434, Dckeifer@aol.com and tell them you want to come along.

Last year we held two successful Lobby Days, bringing dozens of SEMG members to Lansing to meet with legislators to discuss the Club's top environmental concerns. This year we want to expand on the program: letting legislators see that we are just average voters who care about the environment is a very effective use of our volunteer time. As this becomes a regular activity we will educate our elected officials and develop relationships that can only help the environment in the future.

Attend the monthly Committee meetings

We regularly feature a legislator or candidate speaking to us on legislation, politics or his/her electoral prospects. We're continuing to arrange "Meet Your Rep" events at members' homes, another opportunity for Club members to hear from their elected officials and in turn tell them their concerns.

As always, and especially in this important election year, your involvement in the political process is extremely important. You can make a difference. Whether you give money to a green candidate, volunteer for a campaign, or work with the Sierra Club on Lobby Day or another political event, please get involved!

Political Committee meetings are open to all members: just come by. Check our meeting schedule on page 2. We meet in the back room of Jimi's.

8 April

4/6 (Sat) Basic Backpacking Seminar.

1pm. Open to those having an interest in backpacking and a need for a source for low-cost hiking and backpacking trips. The seminar will feature speakers and gear demonstrations covering all aspects of basic backpacking and the Sierra Outings Program spring and summer trips. A woman's perspective on backpacking will also be included. A useful information and resource booklet will be given to participants. Seminar will be held at The Benchmark, 32715 Grand River Ave. in Farmington from 1-4 pm. Registration and payment of \$10 fee no later than 3/20/02 required. Contact John Herrgott, 810-735-9313, johnherrgott@msn.com or Phil Crookshank 313-562-1873, wanderphil3@netzero.net for registration and further information.

4/7 Mystery Hike. 1pm. Come check out an old trail, or perhaps a new one. Find out at the trailhead. We will hike for about 5 miles at this mystery spot, and then have a mystery restaurant stop after. Meet in Bloomfield Township at 1pm in the Costco parking lot near McDonalds on Telegraph (east side) north of Square Lake Rd. Cindy Gunnip, 248-336-2984.

4/12-14 Manistee River Trail Backpack.

We will hike in Friday at 5pm from the Seaton Creek State Forest campground, then backpack for 23 miles in three days. The Manistee River Valley high bluff vistas will knock your sweaty socks off! Must be well equipped, with all your own gear, and food for three days. Limit 6, must reserve by 3/31. \$4 fee + fuel costs. Details: John Calandra, 248-391-8973, John.calandra@worldnet.att.net.

Outings



4/13 (Sat) Potawatomi Trail

We will be doing a more 10 mile loop on the Potawatomi and Crooked Lake trails in the Recreation Area. These trails are full of ups and downs and beautiful views. Bring trail lunch and drinks for the hike; we usually hike about 4-5 hours. Wear sturdy shoes appropriate for the weather. Meet in Livonia at Walmart and Jiffy Lube (near Jeffries) on the SW corner of Middlebelt and I-96 (Jeffries Fwy). Call leader before 8 am at (313-410-7157 cell) if weather looks doubtful. Optional restaurant stop after. Donna Kolojeskie, 313-336-7529.

4/14 Brighton Rec. Area. Noon. A 5-mile

loop hike at a moderate to brisk pace. Bring water, proper hiking boots, trail snacks. See nature come to life with the greening and sprouting wildflowers. Meet in Southfield at noon behind the Marathon station at Tel-Twelve Mall, SE corner of Telegraph and Twelve Mile Rd. Restaurant stop after. Mike Scanlon, 313-884-2214.

4/20 (Sat) Basic Backpacking Seminar.

1pm. An invitation is extended to people having an interest in backpacking who need a source for low-cost hiking and backpacking trips. The seminar will feature speakers and gear demonstrations covering all aspects of basic backpacking and the Sierra Outings Program spring and summer trips. A woman's perspective on backpacking will also be included. A useful information and resource booklet will be given to participants. Seminar will be held at Moosejaw Mountaineering, 34288 Woodward Ave.

Visit SEMG's website at michigan.sierraclub.org/semg for updates and our July-September outings.

The Outings Committee tries to have a wide variety of outings throughout the year—something to appeal to each and every resident of our area. And we have occasional joint outings with other groups and clubs that have like ideals.

Everyone is welcome! Outings are scheduled for Sunday unless otherwise indicated. Outings fee is \$1 unless otherwise noted. All hikes begin at the trailhead. Call the Trip Leader for more details. PLEASE NOTE: because of park and facility regulations, and as a courtesy to other hikers and campers, pets and radios or tape players are not welcome on outings.

Birmingham, from 1-4 pm. Registration and payment of \$10 fee no later than 4/6/02 required. Contact John Herrgott 810-735-9313, johnherrgott@msn.com or Phil Crookshank, 313-562-1873, wanderphil3@netzero.net for registration and further information.

4/20 (Sat) Highland Recreation Area Hike. 10am. We'll take a 2-hour spring wildflower hike in Haven Hill Natural Area. We will be moving slow and stopping often to enjoy and identify the spring wildflowers in the park's deciduous woods and wetlands. Meet at the park entrance station parking area just south of M-59 (East Highland Road) just west of Alpine Valley ski area (14-15 miles west of US-24, Pontiac). Call if weather is questionable. Optional restaurant stop after in Highland. Ken Jacobsen, 248-684-8844.

4/21 Holly Spring Flower Hike. Noon. We'll hike the Holly Rec. Area about 5 miles at a slow pace, taking time to identify early flowering trees and spring wildflowers. Meet in Southfield at noon behind the Marathon station at Tel-Twelve Mall, SE corner of Telegraph and Twelve Mile Rd. Restaurant stop after. Pat & Tom Skinner, 517-552-9121, pskin@ismi.net.

4/27 (Sat) Maybury State Park. 8am. Beginners Birding by sight and sound. Come out to spot birds in fields (usually bluebirds) and woods on a slow paced 1-1/2 mile walk. Emphasis is for beginners, but all are welcome. Bring binoculars, Dress in layers, we go rain or shine. Meet at 8am at the park concession bldg, Eight Mile Rd. entrance, just west of Beck Rd. (and Northville); 5 miles west of I-275. Restaurant stop after. Tom Griebe, 248-349-8782, dearbluebird@peoplepc.com.

4/27-28 Waterloo-Pinckney State Rec. Area Backpack. An easy weekend beginner trip for those new to backpacking. Enjoy the first signs of spring on this low-mileage high-instructional outing. Leader is willing to mentor novices. Meet Sat. morning for two days, one night. Must have all of your own equipment. Contact John Herrgott by 4/19, 810-735-9313, johnherrgott@msn.com.

4/28 White Lake Hike. 10am. We begin our hike at Pepper Ridge Farm and walk through meadows, woodland trails and



Outings

ds on this 5-mile hike through ry in western Oakland County. rring peepers and wildflowers in us. Meet in Bloomfield the Costco parking lot behind on Telegraph (east side) north lake Rd. Restaurant stop after. n, 248-851-9324.

5/4 (Sat) Earth Day Service Event. See page 16 for details. Leader: Bob Duda 734-464-0076.

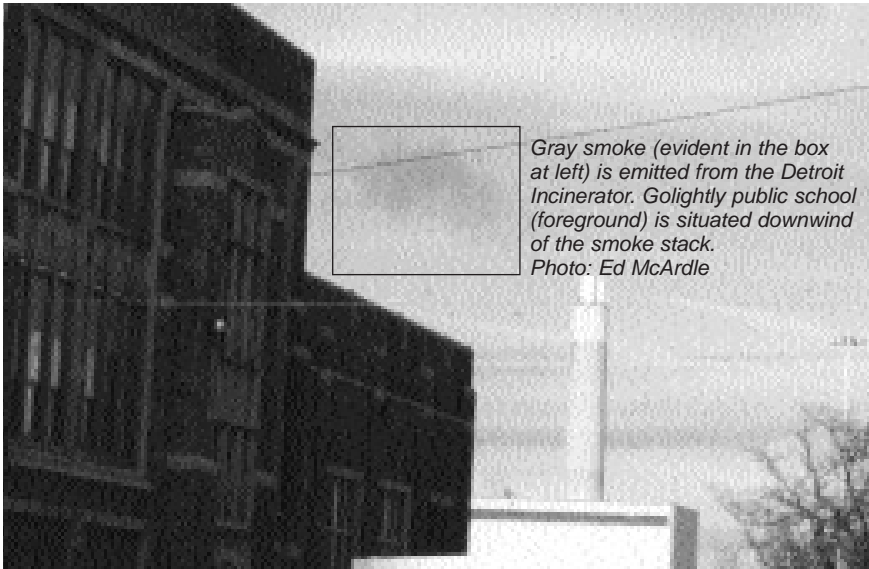
5/4-5 High Country Pathway Backpack. A linear 2-day, 14-mile backpack beginning Sat. 9am at Shoepac Lake Campground (near Atlanta) and ending at Clear Lake State Park. The east segment of the pathway has fine hills and giant sinkholes to explore. Must have all of your own equipment, including meals for 2 days. Limit 6, must reserve by 4/20. Details: John Calandra, 248-391-8973, john.calandra@worldnet.att.net.

5/5 Bald Mountain North Hike. 12:30. We will do an 8-mile, medium-paced hike up hills, down dales, through woods, around puddles and over meadows. The tree canopy should be totally covering the trail for a cool hike on a warm day. Meet in Troy at 12:30 behind the Michigan Nat'l Bank on 14 Mile Rd. just east of I-75 (south edge of Oakland Mall). Restaurant stop after. Cindy Gunnip, 248-336-2984; Don McHarness, 248-814-9937.

5/11 (Sat) Lower Huron Metropark Bike. 10am. Cruise 22-27 miles on a paved bike trail through three Metroparks along the Lower Huron River. Redbuds should be in full bloom. Bring trail lunch and water for after the ride. Meet at Tulip Tree picnic area in Lower Huron Metropark. Take I-94 to Haggerty Rd., south into park to the second parking area (Tulip Tree). Call before 8:45 if weather is ? Mary Stoolmiller, 248-879-6004.

5/12 Mothers Day Wildflower Walk. 9am. A three-hour stroll in Holliday Nature

Incinerator . . . *continued from previous page*



*Gray smoke (evident in the box at left) is emitted from the Detroit Incinerator. Golightly public school (foreground) is situated downwind of the smoke stack.
Photo: Ed McArdle*

only to find that many of the documents necessary to ascertain whether the facility was in compliance with Title V were unavailable. A FOIA request to MDEQ turned out most (but not all) of the missing files, which show that the facility passed the stack test (although just barely in the case of nitrogen oxides, a substance that can form ground level ozone.) There is thus no chance that the DEQ will shut down the facility.

Nevertheless, SEMG is asking for more controls such as carbon injection, which would reduce mercury, particulates and nitrogen oxides. Further, we are asking for continuous monitoring of Hydrochloric Acid (HCL), a procedure used at the Central Wayne incinerator in Dearborn Heights. HCL is harmful to human lungs; it is also an indicator of dioxins that can bioaccumulate in wildlife and humans. We are also requesting that certain items be pulled out of the waste stream: fluorescent lights which are the largest source of mercury in the waste stream,

PVC plastics and other chlorinated chemicals which can create dioxins, computers and electronics which are large sources of lead, mercury and brominated fire retardants. The latter have been detected in human breast milk and Great Lakes fish.

The incinerator's most vulnerable feature may be its finances. Ecology Center in Ann Arbor is preparing a study on the skewed economics of incineration compared to recycling and landfills. Initial figures show that Detroiters may be paying as much as \$130 per ton to burn compared to approximately \$14 per ton to landfill. We hope that these numbers will convince the new mayor and the city council that the dragon on Russell St. needs to be slain, the burning stopped and recycling started.

For more info or a copy of the videotape of the February 18 meeting call Ed at 313-388-6645 or email at ecoed@netzero.net.

Incinerator . . . *continued from page 1*

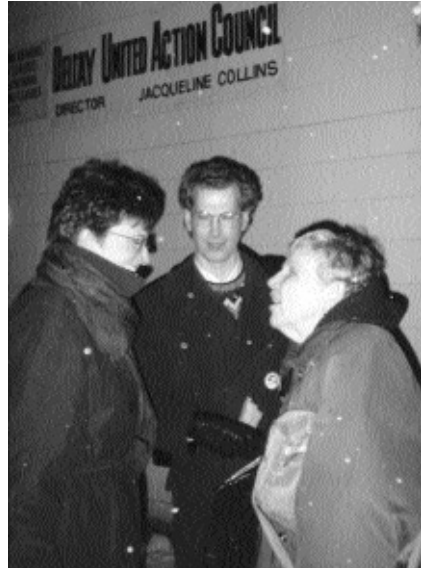
ins. These pollutants are discharged in neighborhoods with the state's highest rates of children's lead levels and asthma. They can easily travel long distances and constitute a threat to the entire Great Lakes region through contamination of the food supply.

The incinerator burns as much of Detroit's trash as can be burned – over 400,000 tons per year. A large amount of commercial waste is also burned, for an annual total of 750,000 tons. While the burners create steam and electricity for Detroit Edison, they also create over 200,000 tons of toxic ash, which has to be sent to a special ash monofill.

At the request of Sierra Club's SEMG, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) held a public hearing to discuss the renewal of the operating permit, a procedure required every five years under Title V of the Clean Air Act. The hearing was held on the eve of January 30 in the midst of a snowstorm at a hard-to-find facility in Delray, eight miles away from the incinerator's neighborhood.

Despite the harsh weather and the inconvenient location, over 50 people attended. There were passionate speeches in opposition to the permit renewal, many from speakers reminiscing about the early days of demonstrations, the occupation of the incinerator's plant and other actions of civil disobedience.

Reacting to written complaints from SEMG, the DEQ agreed to extend the deadline for comments until April 11 but still refused to schedule a second hearing in the incinerator's neighborhood. This refusal violates all environmental justice guidelines – it is indeed an insult to the community. SEMG, along with Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice, The Ecology Center, ACCESS, The Sugar Law Center and others through



*Anna Holden (right) visits with others who braved the snow storm to attend the January 30 hearing in Delray.
Photo: Mary LaFrance.*

the Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition, dispatched a letter to the EPA detailing our complaints.

Approached by SEMG, local politicians, to their credit, weighed in. State Representative Mary Waters and Wayne County Commissioner Jewel Ware scheduled their own public meeting at the Third Baptist Church across the street from Golightly public school and practically in the shadow of the huge stack. On February 18, and despite the short notice, over 50 people attended with many presenting compelling testimony to MDEQ staffers in attendance. A tape of the event has been added to the official record.

In order to prepare for the hearing, SEMG volunteers and others took three trips to DEQ offices and filed a Freedom-of-Information-Act request,

. . . continued on next page

Preserve (Cowan Rd. entrance) will reveal 2 dozen flower species. Flower lists are provided; bring flower field guides, magnifiers, cameras, etc. We'll return to the trailhead in time for your Mother's Day dinner. Meet in Westland at 9am at the north end of the Service Merchandise parking lot (facing the preserve) 1/4 mile west of Wayne Rd, 1/4 mile north of Warren Ave. Philip Crookshank, 313-562-1873.

5/18 (Sat) Matthei Gardens Hike and Wildflower Perusal. 10:30am. Hike about 5 level miles at a moderate pace with stops to ID wildflowers. Meet in Livonia at 10:30am. between Walmart and Jiffy Lube (near Jeffries) on the SW corner of Middlebelt and I-96. Optional lunch stop after. Joanne Cantoni, 248-932-5370.

5/18-19 Hoist Lakes Footpath Backpack. A good spring trip for both the beginner and the experienced backpacker. Soft trails, sink holes, beaver, bald eagles and other wildlife can be seen. Must have all your own equipment. Leave 6am Sat. for two days hiking, one night backcountry camping. Limit 8. Contact leader by 5/11 for full details and travel arrangements. John Herrgott, 810-735-9313, johnherrgott@msn.com.

5/19 Proud Lake Hike. Noon. Get lost in the green peace away from the May hustle and bustle. A 5-mile hike at a moderate pace. Bring proper hiking boots, water, trail snacks. Stops will be made to observe birds and wildlife. Meet in Southfield at noon behind the Marathon station at Tel-Twelve Mall, SE corner of Telegraph and Twelve Mile Rd. Restaurant stop after. Mike Scanlon, 313-884-2214.

5/19 Raisin River Wilderness Canoe. The headwaters of the Raisin are described as the most wild and the "crookedest" river in MI. A tricky, twisty, but gentle 4-5 hour float through forests, an old millpond, to downtown Manchester. Some canoe experience necessary. Bring river lunch; meet at 8:30am at west end of parking lot behind the Dearborn Centennial Library, south side of Michigan Ave., east of Southfield Fwy. \$18 fee must be received by 5/1. Philip Crookshank, 17916 Colgate, Dearborn Heights, Mi. 48125. 313-562-1873.

Outings

5/31-6/2 North Country Trail Backpack. We'll leave the Brevort Lake Campground (just N of Mackinac bridge) Friday 1pm for a linear 21 miles in 3 days. River crossings, lake visits, and explore an exposed portion of the Niagara escarpment. Backcountry camping. Must have all your own gear, meals and supplies for 3 days. Limit 6, reserve by 5/17. \$4 fee + fuel costs. Details: John Calandra, 248-391-8973, john.calandra@worldnet.att.net.

@ June

6/1 (Sat) Canoe Upper Huron. 10am. Take off in Island Lake State Park for a 3-hour float down the river with pleasant people, birds singing, in a quiet, serene, atmosphere. Send \$16 rental fee by 5/25 to Lee Becker, 32856 Harmon Dr. Roseville, 48066, 586-294-7789. Bring river lunch and a smile, meet in Southfield at 10am behind the Marathon station at Tel-Twelve Mall, SE corner of Telegraph and Twelve Mile Rd.

6/16 Holly State Rec. Area Hike. 9am. An early summer 10-miler for the dedicated hiker who desires an extended and brisk-paced hike. Bring trail lunch, water and snacks. Waterproof boots recommended. Meet in Troy at 9am behind Michigan Nat'l Bank on 14 Mile Rd. just east of I-75 (south edge of Oakland Mall). Optional restaurant stop after. John Herrgott, 810-735-9313.

6/30 Island Lake Rec. Area Hike. 9am. A spring hike for the dedicated hiker. An extended and brisk paced hike, we'll do the North 6 mile trail, and the South 8 miles, with rest stops. Bring trail lunch, water and snacks. Meet in Southfield at 9am behind Marathon station at Tel-Twelve Mall, SE corner of Telegraph and 12 Mile Rd. Optional restaurant stop after. John Herrgott, 810-735-9313.

Explore Your Backyard Ecology at SEMG® May Monthly Meeting

by Mary LaFrance,
SEMG Conservation Committee Chair

As Sierra Clubbers, we are especially conscious of how we impact the environment with our choices. Our own backyard should not be an exception. Many popular garden products, for example weed-and-feed-type fertilizers, contain herbicides harmful to wildlife. Unfortunately, garden "stars" such as some beautiful hybrid roses are often dependent on a regular application of chemicals to keep them shining. Reading labels may not be as helpful as we think: what goes into home garden products is not well regulated and they often contain heavy metals, toxins, and excessive amounts of nitrogen. Also, consider the origin of some popular plants sold at retailers. Exotic invasives — crown vetch and periwinkle, for instance — are handsome yet aggressive groundcovers which in no time will be ready and able to take over your garden.

Enter native plants and low maintenance lawns
Michigan has an abundance of beautiful wildflowers which are easy to maintain and provide food for Monarch butterflies and other creatures. Many also benefit the environment by detoxifying the soil and cleansing the water. We can cultivate a lawn that doesn't need regular watering or fertilizer, and where pests can be controlled naturally. Does this sound too good to be true?

Learn more about environmentally safe gardening
Come to our spring kickoff meeting Thursday, May 2, to find out more about back (and front) yard ecology. Kristine Hahn of MSU Wayne County Extension office and Master Gardener Mary LaFrance will be presenting, and they'll be happy to answer your questions. We will have some native plants available to take home with you, too!



Find Out What® Happens Locally at the SEMG Event April

We've invited several other environmental groups to join us for the evening so you may learn about various environmental issues and activities. Come meet with representatives from Nurture Community Leadership, Detroit Summer, Detroiters Working for Watershed Protection, Friends of the Detroit River (FDR), Healthy Environment Action Team (HEAT), Transportation Planning Committee, and Supported Agriculture (CSA) and other

