



Save the Pine Bush

March/April Newsletter

Mar/Apr 12 No. 111 • 33 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12210 • email pinebush@mac.com • phone 434-1954 • fax 434-6659 • web <http://www.savethepinebush.org> • Circ. 1000

Vegetarian/Vegan Lasagna Dinner

Thursday, March 22, 6:00 p.m.

Neil Gifford

Conservation Director of the Albany Pine Bush Management Commission

will speak about

The Work of the Commission; the Pine Bush, and how the Karner Blues are Doing

Save the Pine Bush is pleased to have Neil Gifford come back again and speak about the work of the Commission, the status of the Pine Bush ecosystem, and, of course, how our favorite butterfly is doing. **New Location:** At the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut Street (people with cars can park in the lot near the door). All-the-vegetarian-and-vegan-lasagna-you-can-eat, garden salad, garlic bread and homemade pies. Only \$12 for adults, \$5 for students, and \$2 for children. People who make reservations are served first. For reservations, please leave a message for Rezsins Adams at 462-0891 or Lynne Jackson at 434-1954 or email pinebush@mac.com.

Interested people are welcomed to attend the program beginning at 7:00 for which there is no charge. Note the dinner is on *Thursday* this month.

Save the Pine Bush Equinox Hike

Saturday, March 24, 2012 9:30 AM

Meet at: Pine Bush Discovery Center Parking Lot, East side of New Karner Rd. (Route 155) opposite "T" with Old State Rd., Albany, NY

Destination: The trails at the Di Filippo Farm, North side of The King's Road just past its junction with Curry Rd.

Leader: John Wolcott • For more information: call John Wolcott at 465-8930
People might want to apply sun screen because the sun's rays are progressively shining at a more direct angle since it is halfway between the Winter and Summer Solstice in the North Temperate Zone and at the opposite halfway point in the Southern Temperate Zone. We want

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Run Away Climate: Steven Leibo, PhD Speaks About Climate Change at Save the Pine Bush Dinner

by Grace Nichols

ALBANY: Steven Leibo, PhD, a Sage Colleges Professor of International History and Politics, as well as an International Affairs Commentator on WAMC Northeast Public Radio, came to speak to us about the Climate Change crisis. Dr. Leibo has been a constant presence on the academic and environmental scene in the Capital Region for the past several years, in a recognizable fisherman's cap, speaking, holding seminars and films, and keeping us focused on change.

Dr. Leibo gave a gigantic amount of information very fast; a speedy powerpoint chock full of images and statistics galloped across the

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Southern Life, Northern City: The History of Albany's Rapp Road Community

by Tom Ellis

ALBANY: Beverly Bardequez, a long-time Rapp Road community resident, was the guest speaker at the January 18 Save the Pine Bush dinner. She lovingly spoke about an African-American neighborhood on Rapp Road that was begun in the 1930s, composed of former residents of Shubuta, Mississippi, and their posterity. Her presentation was titled, "Southern Life, Northern City: The History of Albany's Rapp Road Community."

Living conditions, she said, for African-Americans were difficult and often harsh during the Great Depression in Mississippi. The sharecroppers could not escape debt. Each spring they borrowed funds to pay their living expenses from the white farmer whose land they worked; after the harvest came the settling up when the landlord "stacked the books" leaving

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screen like a runaway roller coaster that is taking the world's population with it.

Dr. Leibo reviewed the evidence of ice cores and the dissolved gases within them, that climate have changed over the last many years and CO₂/methane values within the ice, going back 1 million years. He also pointed out that climate science itself is rapidly evolving and that the Inconvenient Truth, a source which has informed many of us about climate change was based on the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report of 2011 which was based on data from the 1990s. Our more recent observations and understandings support:

- 1) Climate change in the past progressed much faster than previously thought.
- 2) There isn't a smooth escalator of gradual change; change has come in bursts.
- 3) Future changes are happening much faster than expected.

And therefore, this isn't an issue for "our children": The Climate Crisis has arrived.

Dr. Leibo says that hominids have been on Earth 4.4 million years and for most of that time there was an erratic climate reality to which these primates adapted. Only in the last 11.5 thousand years has a stabilizing environment allowed the agricultural revolution to unfold. The oceans began to settle down and we have been having the era of the "Long Summer." Dr. Leibo believes that the building up of surpluses allowed for the building of civilizations and the protection for small climate failures. As this gave us protection against minor climatic changes, it also made us more vulnerable to big climatic changes, as society was more static, with specialized workers who were not as adapted to moving quickly and leaving everything behind.

Right at the beginning of the talk, Dr. Leibo took a side route into the competing economic systems that arose at that point, resulting in Corporate Globalized Capital and the rise of China and India. As he puts it, the shift to the energy of the dead (coal and oil, which are hydrocarbon remains of ancient life) allowed fantastic expenditures of energy with the accompanying release of carbon into the atmosphere. Economic Growth per capita around the world was growing ten times faster than population growth; population itself has expanded from a billion in 1776 to 6.89 billion people at present. The United States has led the way, though in 2007, China passed the US in its annual CO₂ emissions per year.

Dr. Leibo's message is that there is essentially no reputable scientific debate regarding the reality of human caused climate change. He quotes the September, 2006 Scientific American issue as announcing "The Debate on Global

Warming is Over." The debate, so far as environmentalists are concerned, was over in the 1980s though resistance from industry is strong. Dr. Leibo recommends that we read *The Climate Coverup, The Crusade to Deny Global Warming* by James Hoggan with Richard Littlemore which chronicles an attempt to convince the public of an uncertainty that doesn't exist.

The next segment of the talk explained the mechanism of the greenhouse effect and ability of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane to trap heat. Here on Earth, in 2011, our atmospheric carbon is 393.09 ppm which is 37% above preindustrial amounts. The hottest years on record are 2010, 2005, 2009, 2007, and 1998; each decade since the 1980s has been the hottest decade on record.

Dr. Leibo's powerpoint showed before and after shots of many of the world's glaciers and horrifying photos of societies caught in floods and storms, as well as areas of extreme drought; droughts lead to wildfires and they are occurring on a massive scale.

We were peppered with examples: August 2010, Northwest Pakistan – massive floods; Norway's Hurricane Dagmar, Dec. 2011; 2003 European heat wave with 15,000 deaths in France and 20,000 deaths in Italy; a temperature of 129 degrees in Pakistan in 2010; Texas, 2011 – Summer temperatures off the chart compared to all previously recorded temperatures. The number of examples were staggering, coupled with photos of pure misery from multiple places on every continent.

There has been a doubling of category 4 and 5 hurricanes according to Morris Bender et al in Science magazine of Jan 22, 2010.

Dr. Leibo, himself, has travelled quite extensively and recounted first person reports from residents of the Hudson Bay; all over the Arctic permafrost is melting. This in turn releases a lot of methane as the vegetation which depends on the permafrost rots. This accelerates climate change. When the glaciers melt, they also release trapped methane.

Wildfires also contribute to climate change through deforestation which cuts down on carbon sequestration. These are what we call positive feedback – when a mechanism increases the cause of a phenomena creating more of the same.

Dr. Leibo shared with us many projections of what can and will happen; as the ice shelves collapse, the sea level rise will happen quickly. A meter rise will establish 100 million refugees. Two meters rise will result in 200 million refugees. Though I can't vouch for these numbers, it is perfectly clear that massive levels of displacement, escalating disease, famine, and conflict will accompany any substantial sea level rise.

Dr. Leibo believes the United States has been the slowest and most reluctant to respond to Climate Change because of the legacy of resistance to Government Regulation, stemming from a laissez-faire economic approach. Yet, there are some good developments in the US: Obama has given billions to new energy projects and energy efficiency research. There has been progress in high speed transportation; he has used his purchasing power to push alternatives to cars; the US Air Force is on board with the Air Force Jet One going faster than the speed of sound on biofuel. Coal fired plants are no longer being built. We are building more geothermal energy facilities. The EPA is getting stronger. There is more social action, such as the Tar Sands actions, aimed at halting Climate Change.

On the worldwide level, China has been a clean energy investor, investing 34.6 billion dollars; they are leaders in research and development in Carbon Capture and Sequestration. He cites geothermal development in Indonesia, Solar and Wind development in South Korea and green jobs growth around the world.

The United States has been lagging. As Obama has remarked, "We were the leaders in solar. We owned clean energy economy in the 1980's. Guess what? China Leads in solar energy and Germany leads in Wind." Congress failed to pass the Clean Energy Bill, and we are the only major nation without one. We have resisted treaties from Kyoto forward. The United States commitment to energy alternatives needs to increase dramatically.

We cannot stop Climate Change; it has begun. But with vast commitment and immediate action as a world community, we can decrease the horrible consequences.

This presentation did not focus on biodiversity and the consequences of climate change to the Natural World. There was no information about developing local economies, changing our lifestyles or living green. Instead, it focused on human society and comparative national economic policies, while dramatizing the gravity of our situation as a vulnerable species with complete dependence upon the Earth and her Atmosphere.

Mark Your Calendars!

Save the Pine Bush Dinners will be on the following dates at our new location: Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut Street, Albany.

March 22, Thursday

April 18, Wednesday

May 16, Wednesday

June 20, Wednesday

Sally's Recycling Corner

compiled by Sally Cummings

Here's 10 quick tips for reusing coffee grounds:

- If you have a worm farm, dump the grounds in - I swear the caffeine jolt makes the worms chomp through more. But seriously, it doesn't seem to do them any harm; but I'd recommend mixing them through the pile so the worms don't overdose on any residual caffeine.

- Use coffee grounds as a plant fertilizer. Sprinkle the grounds around the base of the plant then dig them in a little. They can also be sprinkled directly on your lawn.

- Add the grounds to compost piles to enrich nutrient content - the grounds contain Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium and Sulfur. Phosphorous is becoming scarce, so we need to conserve it as much as possible.

- Add water to the grounds and allow to stand for a day or two. Drain off and then use as a liquid plant fertilizer - cold coffee that you'd

usually toss down the sink can also be used in this way.

- After drying the grounds thoroughly, add them to an old stocking. Tie off the ends and then use in cupboards and your refrigerator as an odor absorber. Alternatively, you can just place the dried grounds in a container of some sort.

- Rubbing your hands with used coffee grounds will remove strong smells such as onion or fish.

- Grounds can be used as a scourer for greasy pots and pans

- A ring of coffee grounds around sensitive plants can discourage ants and some other pests.

- Use as a wood stain. Allow them to soak in a small amount of water overnight (or hot water for a shorter period), then drain off. The amount of water you use will determine how dark the stain is. Also good for touch-ups to mahogany furniture.

- This one's interesting and I can't say I've tried it. Dry out the coffee grounds in a warm (not hot) oven; then add equal weight of fresh coffee grounds and then use that mix to create another brew. After that brew, try one of the tips above - I wouldn't recommend repeating the cycle :).

By the way, a good tip for how *not* to use coffee grounds. Don't try to get rid of them via your kitchen sink. They'll stick to grease in the drain and form the basis for further build-up. Over a period of time this will totally clog the drain.

With all these wonderful re-use options for coffee grounds; perhaps hit your local coffee house and ask them if you can collect theirs on a regular basis. They'll reduce waste and you'll have a useful product - everyone wins! You might want to get in quick; since the time this article was originally published it seems many people have been doing just that, so used coffee grounds are becoming quite sought after

Southern Life, Northern City: The History of the Rapp Road Community - Continued from Page 1

the tenant farmer in debt continuously year after year. They moved North to escape the perpetual debt peonage and access better educational opportunities and voting rights; many obtained much better jobs in the Albany area than were available in the South. They worked at Tobin Packing, the Watervliet Arsenal, and the Port of Albany. African-Americans were also eager to escape Jim Crow laws and the ever-present threat of deadly violence. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Bardequez displayed photos of Shubuta including one of bodies hanging from a river bridge. She said pregnant women were sometimes lynched.

Elder Louis W. Parson moved to Albany from Shubuta in the 1920s; he became leader of the church known as "79 Hamilton Street." He drove to and from Shubuta many times, bringing sharecroppers North eager or desperate to escape Mississippi poverty and racism. The migrants often came North with no possessions other than the clothes they wore. Elder Parson timed his visits to Shubuta to coincide with church conventions; he drove away on Saturday nights with sharecroppers whose absence would not be noticed until Monday when they failed to show up for work. By then they were hundreds of miles away and possibly no longer in the South. Another Elder - John "Jack" Johnson - continued the work of Mr. Parson, traveling frequently to Shubuta to bring additional farmers to Albany.

Mr. Parson founded The First Church of God in Christ at 79 Hamilton Street. When this

building was demolished to make way for the Empire State Plaza fifty years ago, the church moved to the Wilborn Temple (formerly Beth Emeth Synagogue). The church held baptisms in the Hudson River.

Ms. Bardequez said there were two periods of what historians call the Great Migration, when African-Americans fled the South in large numbers. The first was from 1910-1940 when 1,600,000 blacks moved out of the South; 372,000 came to New York. Between 1940 and 1970, a half-million of the 5 million African-Americans who fled the South came to New York.

At first, the new migrants lived in the south end of Albany. Being rural farmers, many were uncomfortable with city living. Eventually two 14-acre sections were purchased on Rapp Road. The new immigrants began building shanties and soon much better houses in their new Pine Bush community. Some church elders saw the beautiful Pine Bush as a "Holy Land." Children attended School 27 (now Eagle Point) on Western Avenue in Albany. When the city refused to provide transportation for the children, the community bought a school bus and drove their children to and from school.

Ms. Bardequez showed photos of Rapp Road homes where many residents reside. In 2003, the neighborhood received both national and New York State Historic District Designation. She said the Pyramid Corporation has offered to purchase the neighborhood but it is

Action Alert!

Bonding for Landfill "Restoration"

ALBANY: The Albany Common Council is considering voting on bonding \$2.35 million for the restoration project of the Albany landfill. This "restoration" is the extremely expensive project where the capped-over section of the landfill is being "restored" to Pine Bush ecosystem.

Common Council Member Leah Golby has said that the Common Council is poised to vote for the bonding, without even the most basic information about the success or failure of the landfill restoration project to date.

These are Save the Pine Bush's demands:

- 1) Save the Pine Bush demands that reports on the success or failure of the landfill "restoration" project be made public before any vote is taken on bonding to continue the landfill restoration project.
- 2) No more bonding for the landfill restoration project should be approved unless it is proven to work
- 3) Purchasing privately-owned Pine Bush ecosystem and adding it to the Preserve is a better way to expand, protect and preserve the Pine Bush. The Common Council should use the landfill restoration funds to buy land.

In the upcoming weeks, there will be opportunities to comment on the bonding for the restoration. We will be sending out Action Alerts for people to come out and speak up for preserving the Pine Bush by purchasing land to add to the Preserve. If you would like to receive notices, please email pinebush@mac.com

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hikers to avoid both Lyme disease and skin cancer. Also bring a raincoat and a sweater or windbreaker, be ready for any kind of weather, which is never normal or too predictable anymore.

Bring : A light trail lunch and something to drink, or plan to join some us for lunch at Yonder Farms on Albany Street in the Pine Bush, where one can get a good lunch and hang out and discuss politics, environment, the Pine Bush or whatever you fell like discussing.

For more information: Call 465-8930

Equinox - Earth Day - Every Day

by John Wolcott

Join us in celebrating the approximate original time for Earth Day. Earth Day was proposed in San Francisco in 1969, at a UNESCO Conference by John McConnell, who felt this natural event was appropriate for the occasion. It was also appropriate that Earth Day was first celebrated the next year, 1970 by the City of San Francisco named after the Saint whom many consider the Patron of the environment. The U.N. followed the example of San Francisco and has been observing Earth Day on the Equinox

New Address for Ward Stone

Ward Stone is a big friend of the Pine Bush and has spoken at many SPB dinners. We were sorry to hear that Ward Stone suffered a series of small strokes. He is doing well and has been moved to a rehabilitation hospital in Massachusetts. Cards and letters are welcome and can be sent to: Ward Stone, Kindred Hospital-Parkview, 1400 State St., Rm 323, Springfield, MA 01109. All of us at Save the Pine Bush wish Ward a quick recovery. The environment needs him!

every year by ringing it's Peace Bell donated by Japan. The U.N. of late has also been participating in the Earth Day founded on April 22, 1970 by Senator Gaylord Nelson. He felt that the Equinox was subject to be a little chilly for outdoor events. But that's less and less true now due to global warming. I think we should observe Earth day on the nearest Saturday to March 21, The actual Equinox, and emphasize global warming. In 2009, the U.N. designated April 22 as Mother Earth Day and so now observes two Earth Days and there's no reason why we can't either. Like Christmas we shouldn't limit love, kindness, generosity, and help to the needy to one day. So with Earth Day we need all year to act and speak out for our concern for the earth and the ways it sustains everyone's lives and the more so if it's treated better and understood better. Two things I'd

like to here, set straight:

Stop calling the original Earth Day: "The Spring Equinox Earth Day" It smacks of geo centricity which can be as bad as and perhaps mirror ethno-centricity and the chron-centricity by which we ignore the mistakes of the past and fail to learn positive lessons from it. And disrespect the built environment of the past.

The other thing I wish to set straight on this occasion is that protecting our environment from climate change and major pollution problems and loss of natural areas is seeking true "Homeland Security " since the earth is, broadly speaking, our true homeland and "our" means everybody on our homeland.

For those who can't drive or don't wish to, call the information number at 465-8930 and we will seek to arrange a ride.

The Equinox Hike on March 24 is free and open to the public!

**Please Note: The next
Save the Pine Bush vegetarian/vegan
lasagna dinner will be on a different day
of the month — Thursday, March 22.**

Return Service Requested

Save the Pine Bush
A Project of the Social Justice Center
33 Central Avenue
Albany, NY 12210



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