



Save the Pine Bush

March/April Newsletter

Mar/Apr 13 No. 115 • 33 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12210 • email pinebush@mac.com • phone 462-0891 • fax 434-6659 • web http://www.savethepinebush.org • Circ. 1000

Vegetarian/Vegan Lasagna Dinner Thursday, March 21, 6:00 p.m. Dan Plaat

will speak about

Horizontality and Consensus; Group Decision Making for a True Democracy

The spirit of the Occupy and similar movements is to look for alternatives and new directions in group decision making and democracy. Many believe our nation's governing institutions are broken. These institutions have failed in that a tiny minority of people make the decisions for the rest of us. For thousands of years people in small groups have used a form of consensus to give every member of a group an equal say in decisions. Activist groups today are experimenting with consensus decision-making in their fight for a more just society. Some believe moving to horizontal structures — where everyone has the same rank or value in a group — is to move towards greater equality. Come hear Dan speak about these new, innovative, and much more fair methods to reach decisions.

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, \$6 for students, and \$2 for children. People who make reservations are served first. For reservations, please leave a message for Rezsine Adams at 462-0891 or email pinebush@mac.com.

Interested people are welcomed to attend the program beginning at 7:00 for which there is no charge.

Save the Pine Bush March Tour

A Bit of Pine Bush Transportation History

Announcing A Visit to the Old Electric Power Station for The Schenectady Railway Co.

Interurban Electric Train Between Schenectady and Albany and Return

Saturday, March 23, 2013 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;

Leader and For More Information: John Wolcott -465-8930

A while back we sponsored a hike to Karner Crossing formerly known as Centre, N.Y., where Huckleberry Lane used to cross the tracks into an incredible area rich in huckleberries. This same area

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www.savethepinebush.org

Assemblywoman Pat Fahy and Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk After the Election: Doing the Peoples' Work

by Tom Ellis

ALBANY, NY: Newly elected Assemblywoman Pat Fahy and state Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk were the featured speakers at the January 16 Save the Pine Bush dinner held at the Westminster Presbyterian Church. Carol Waterman made the introductions. Ms. Tkaczyk had not yet been certified the winner but in her comments, she said she was certain she would prevail, which she did two days later.

Pat Fahy began saying that while she barely had time to read the new gun control law that was rushed through the Legislature a week earlier, and is not comfortable with the process used to pass it; in this case, it was acceptable because

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Save the Pine Bush Loses A Very Dear Friend



It is with great sadness that we observe the passing of our dear friend, Louise Burch. Louise was a stalwart volunteer for Save the Pine Bush for decades. She folded newsletters and drove Rezsine Adams and the newsletters to the

post office. But, most important of all, she selflessly washed the dishes at the dinners, so that others could enjoy the food and the listen to the speakers. She did those behind the scenes important necessary tasks that needed to be done. I still cannot believe that Louise is no longer with us - she is much missed. — *Lynne Jackson*

Louise had a rough exterior and a heart of gold. — *Rezsine Adams*

All, Louise was a dear friend to us. She was

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Louise Burch, continued from page 1

always friendly, greeting people who came into our church, from where she was sitting. She was highly efficient and always completed what she set out to do. She was a worker and she always had good advice for us. We will miss her greatly and we keep Chet in our prayers. — *John Wolcott and Linda Becker*

Louise Burch was a reliable worker at Save the Pine Bush dinners, every month for many years. She did the dishes while we all got to eat and watch the program. She was also very upbeat and a lot of fun. I will miss her. — *Russell Ziembra*

Hello, It is with heavy heart I write you after learning of the passing of our dear friend and dedicated Save the Pine Bush volunteer Louise Burch. While many of you may know better Louise's husband Chet, whose booming voice and handlebar mustache for years has announced the commencement of serving of our dinners, Louise more often than not would be behind the scene working in the kitchen, helping with its preparation and after, washing our dirty dishes and making sure all were returned to their proper places in the cupboards. My condolences to Chet. — *Jim Travers*

Here is her obituary from the *Times Union*:

ALBANY Louise F. Burch, 65, of Albany, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 1, 2013. She was the daughter of Herbert E. Field, Sr. and the late Esther LaMotte. She was a 1965 graduate of Morrisville-Eaton Central Schools and a 1967 graduate of SUNY Morrisville. She was employed at Albany Medical Center Hospital and also with various visiting nurses companies in the capital district. She held several offices at the Albany chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club, Save the Pine Bush, Caroga Fish & Game club and the Society for Creative Anachronism. Louise was hard working and enjoyed embroidery and beading. She embroidered many linen napkins for the Morrisville-Eaton 65 reunion, and was a needle working queen. She was a member of the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association where she was the medical director for the Northeastern Primitive Rendezvous and the Eastern Primitive Rendezvous, and also the secretary of the Protestant Young Adults. She was an elder at the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church and the Westminster Presbyterian Church where she also served as a trustee. She was a volunteer with the Albany Red Cross, Louise loved and cared for everyone. In addition to her father, Louise is survived by her husband of over 41 years, Chester J. Burch; her brother, Thomas (Patricia) Field; her sisters, Rachael (Bruce) Epstein and Mary Stewart. She is also survived by her aunts, Dorcas

(Jesse) Townsley and Mary (Ernest) Slusher; her uncles, John Field and James (Doreen) LaMotte; and numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews and cousins. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, January 12 at 2 p.m. at the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 262 State Street, Albany, NY 12210. Memorial contributions may be made to the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut Street, Albany, NY 12210 in Louise's memory. To leave a special message for the family, please visit www.newcomeralbany.com

March 23 Hike, continued from page 1

was once also incredibly rich in butterflies, especially the Karner Blue. We will now visit the beginning of Huckleberry Lane and the electrical power facility that powered the Interurban trains that got many car free berry pickers and butterfly fanciers, to the Pine Bush for about the first half of the last century. The building is still standing and is owned by John Knighton who displays some antique cars there at 1820 Central Avenue (Schenectady Turnpike or Rte. 5 some these and other cars are for sale. Some description of the original power operation can be given as well as something about fur dealers who once operated there as well. Oh yes! Don't forget about the story of the roving gypsy band with their wonderful music and dancing, that used to encamp every summer next door where the Mohawk Drive is used to be.

The Walk is free and open to the public!

After the Election, continued from page 1

gun control had been debated at length for many years in New York.

She congratulated SPB on its 35th birthday and SPB's preservation efforts. She said preservation is not her field but her husband bikes to work at RPI where he is on the faculty. She wants to be an ally of SPB, recently visited the Discovery Center, and has requested membership on the Assembly environmental and energy committees. She has lived in NYS for 15 years after moving from Chicago.

One dinner attendee, Ivan Vamos, urged her support for a proposed walkway across the Hudson River from downtown Albany.

Lynne Jackson said the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission was created by the state in part to replace SPB but this did not occur. SPB has even sued the Pine Bush Commission. Lynne said the Commission does great science but has no money available for land purchases or land trades. Lynne said the Commission obtained its office and the Discovery Center - the former SEFCU building - in a land trade. Lynne urged Ms. Fahy to lend support to legislation that

passes the Assembly each year to make it easier for groups to obtain legal "standing" in court to protect land from developers.

SPB member Grace Nichols said the new gun control law contains provisions negatively impacting people with mental illnesses and additional time was needed for the Legislature and the public to analyze the bill.

Sounding not at all like a politician, Cecelia Tkaczyk, said she grew up on a dairy farm and lives in Duaneburg. She had grassroots support from the start of her campaign, and was outspent by her opponent \$800,000 to \$300,000. Her district contains part of five counties. She won a three-way Democratic Party primary, and also won a Green Party primary and line on the election ballot.. She said she obtained 1987 votes on the Green Party line and urged the Green Party to not leave its ballot line blank (to always run a candidate) or someone else, possibly not a Green, will take it.

She said one of her priorities is to obtain membership on the Senate elections committee effecting legislation to eliminate the numerous post-election series of steps she took to assure her victory.

Lynne Jackson mentioned the manner in which NYS Police arrested the Occupy Albany people including putting their hands inside the pockets of protesters. Lynne said, "Peaceful protest is under considerable attack in the United States."

Lou Ismay said he believes Climate Change will make the higher elevation areas of NYS more suitable for agriculture. Ms. Thaczyk said she desires to create the infrastructure so farmers can easily connect via the Internet with their customers. She said, "We need to live sustainably" and has neighbors who run a Community Supported Agriculture.

The new senator said elections should be publicly funded; regular average people can not run if they must raise \$1 million to be competitive. She said she favors a state-wide fracking ban. The natural gas industry, she said, must comply with clean water laws. "If we can not ban it [fracking], we can make it far more difficult for the gas industry to frack." She said she favors building code changes to require alternatives to fossil fuels for heating and cooling.

Next Dinner Dates

Thursday, March 21

Wednesday, April 17

Wednesday, May 15

Wednesday, June 19

6:00 PM at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut Street, Albany

My Cry by Grace Nichols

One Quarter of ALL Mammals are on the verge of extinction;
The American Academy of Sciences said it a few years ago --
We couldn't even get a headline
None had the time to hang a banner.

I used to think we could sue our way to salvation
Postage stamps
Skin grafts on the surface of the mother.

Can you feel it? -- the last ragged breaths of a truckload of loons,
felled by Botulism E, on the shores of the Great Lakes, in a world out of balance.
Can you see it? -- the muddy refugee camps, the unstoppable epidemics.

We pronounce solemn words over the rushing waters of Saudia Arabia,
in areas which have only EVER had 1/4 inch of rain in January.

We are standing on a precipice at the edge of the world.
We hold in our bloody hands
raw human need:
Do I belong?
With whom to I go to which dance?
Who am I dancing with anyhow -- drowning bodies, cholera in Haiti?

We are spitting in a high wind on the precipice at the edge of the world

While Actions Speak Louder.

Forward the Climate — Protest in Washington, DC

by Grace Nichlos

WASHINGTON, DC: 50,000 of us marched on Washington DC on Sunday, February 17, 2013, the largest climate demonstration yet, called "Forward on the Climate." As Reverend Yearwood, who MCed the event said " 50 years ago was very important, right here, Dr. Martin King marched. We marched for jobs and food. We marched for Equality.We all came together as humanity. But guess what? This rally 50 years later is as important or more important because, as they were fighting for Equality, We are fighting for Existence."

Protesters came from all over the Northeast, Appalachia, the Midwest, Alaska and Canada to say NO to the Keystone Pipeline and its threat of oil spills, NO to mountaintop removal and the childhood cancer rate escalation surrounding those mines and NO to an further development of Fracking (hydraulic fracturing of shale for natural gas.)

For me, this was a real inspiration, a reminder that we are not alone in this struggle.

Conversing with some of the 300 Fossil Free Appalachian State students, or discussing the Pipeline with folks in Nebraska, or talking to Mount Holyoke students and Binghamton residents or riding with Skidmore students and Vermont Wobblies, my spirit was lifted by their strength and resolve.

We are reaching a consensus as Americans. Our energy usage is the problem and our responsibility is the solution. We are responsible for our lifestyle choices, but perhaps even more responsible to stop the defilement of the environment by the fossil fuel industry. If we do not halt this last frenzied attempt to suck the last lethal greenhouse gas generating fuel from the ground, we are surely sunk.

I am looking forward to witnessing increasing action all over this country in defense of the atmosphere, the web of life and the future. I am looking forward to marching and laboring side by side with all my fellow beings determined to create a sustainable world.

1 Rapp Road, Extension Development

By Andy Arthur and Grace Nichols

We went to Albany Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) Meeting on Feb. 27, 2013 to comment on the proposed extension of the 1 Rapp Road, which is at the corner of South Frontage Road and Rapp Road.

The proposal would add a one floor expansion on to the back of 1 Rapp Road, building in the adjoining area between 1 Rapp Road and 5 Rapp Road. The proposal would also add 12 parking spots, and would preserve the historic buildings at 5 Rapp Road.

Save the Pine Bush was initially very concerned about the impacts on 170 Washington Avenue Extension by the proposed expansion of 1 Rapp. 170 Washington, owned by the Daughters of Sarah, is high-quality Albany Pine Bush that is essential to preserve as Karner Blue habitat, and as a connector parcel.

According to the site plan, the proposed expansion is set back from 170 Washington and is only one story, so it's unlikely to shade out this sensitive ecosystem. Likewise, the parking lot is located along Rapp Road, rather than along the 170 Washington, so it's unlikely to suffer impacts of gasoline, motor oil, and other contamination from parking lot run-off.

That said, we did emphasize to the BZA that protecting 170 Washington was a priority of Save the Pine Bush, and that while we had "no opposition" to this proposal, the sensitive lands next door must be protected both from development, and from any impact of changes to surrounding parcels.

We did suggest using porous cement parking lot surfacing to reduce surface runoff. We also suggested using rain gardens, a wonderful ecologically sound way to create a buffer between a parking lot, a gas station or any polluted surface and the stormwater. The rain garden is composed of beautiful native plants planted in gravel, with sand underneath and then soil. The effect is to allow water to drip down by gravity. The rushing of the water is slowed down and the progressively more tightly packed particles below filter the water, cleaning it up significantly if not totally.

The DeThomasis brothers who filed for the permit showed interest in learning more about rain gardens as a way to make their developments more respectful to the environment.

Editor's note: The BZA approved the project as is, with no additional environmental protections.

Find the Right Way to Deal with Weird Things to Recycle at WomansDay.com – Can I Recycle...?

Whether doing major spring cleaning or just sorting through old household supplies, occasionally, we all run into a recycling stumper—crayons, foam peanuts, old VHS tapes? Good grief. The more obscure an item, the harder it is for us to resist throwing it out the easy way—in the trash can. But the truth is we really are doing ourselves (and our planet!) a big favor by repurposing used parts and pieces. So, the next time clutter is being banished from the house, refer to this list of wacky recycling tips. We promise it really is useful.

1. Batteries

Environmental, Health and safety Online have initiated a national program called Call2-Recycle, which has collected and recycled more than 42 million pounds of rechargeable batteries, and have partnered up with retailers and recycling programs nationwide for our recycling convenience. Visit their site ehso.com to find a location near you.

2. Candle Jars

I'm a jar-candle addict, but who wants to melt out the leftover wax so you can recycle the jar? I found a new trick: Put the used jar in the freezer, and an hour later, you can tap the bottom a few times and pop the wax right out. Better yet, stick to tea lights. As long as the package says that the metal cups are aluminum, you can pull out the used wick and toss the metal in the recycling along with your cans.

3. CDs and DVDs

Mails discs to Back Thru The Future (cdrecyclingforfree.com), a woman-owned electronics recycling and data destruction company.

4. Crayons

In my house, the most unpopular crayon colors are gray and pale yellow. I never thought

twice about tossing the duds in the trash, but it turns out that crayon wax spends eternity in a landfill. Instead, put them in a small box and send them to the recycling program run by Crazy Crayons, where your castoffs will be melted down and turned into a new generation of crayons. For details, go to crazycrayons.com.

5. Foam Peanuts

Some are now made from vegetable starch. To test, toss one under water—if it disintegrates, you've got nontoxic, biodegradable peanuts. As for the nonrecyclable plastic kind, call The Peanut Hotline (800-828-2214) for a list of businesses that accept them.

6. Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs

Recycle them through your town's hazardous waste program. If your town doesn't have one, put bulbs in a thick plastic bag to keep mercury from leaking; tie shut and place in the garbage. Home Depot will take them back.

7. VHS Tapes

Have taken over, everyone has a pile of old VHS tapes gathering dust. To keep them out of landfills, drop them in the mail to Alternative Community Training, a nonprofit Missouri company that provides jobs to people with disabilities.

Workers erase the tapes, reselling the ones that are in good shape and recycling the plastic parts of the rest. They've recycled more than 1 million tapes so far. Mail the tapes (at the cheaper USPS media mail rate) to:

ACT, 2200 Burlington, Columbia, MO 65202

8. Paint

Go to earth911.org/recycling to find out where to recycle it in your zip code. Or donate it to your local Habitat for Humanity ReStore (habitat.org).

9. Trophies

Yes, it's hard to part with past awards that remind you of when you were the fastest, strongest or, quite frankly, the best, but if you must, here's how: Send them to Art Inc.; they'll take your award and, with it, make new art that they will give children's groups or worthy causes like the Special Olympics. Or, ship them off to Awardex.com, where they'll use your old trophies to make new awards.

10. Phone Books

Yes, they're recyclable, but you can't just toss them in with your regular stuff. Who knew? Instead, wait for your town's phone book pickup. If there is none, go to yellowpages.com/recycle to find out what to do in your area.

Save The Pine Bush is in need of more hike leaders.

For the last few years ; the Save the Pine Bush outing leaders have been Andy Arthur, Claire Nolan and John Wolcott. Our outing events are once a month, always on a Saturday and usually the third or fourth Saturday. We three, however, are not always readily available and we've come close to having no hike at all for a given month as happened for the first time ever last month. To prevent this from happening again, we are appealing for more volunteer leaders.

With more leaders we can hopefully have hikes lead by persons with more time and less competing obligations for any given hike date. I and Andy are generally available for going over data about various Pine Bush area and routes. Please e-mail the Newsletter at pinebush@mac.com or call John Wolcott at 465-8930 if you are interested in volunteering for this. Hope to see you out on the trail!

Return Service Requested

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A Project of the Social Justice Center
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