



The Central Ohio Sierran

News of the Central Ohio Group

January-February 2012

Volume 41, Number 1

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

All programs, meetings, events and outings in this newsletter are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

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Sierra Club Ohio Chapter Retreat

Sat. – Sun., Jan. 21-22

Deer Creek State Park

20635 State Park Rd. 20
Mt. Sterling, OH 43143

The annual Ohio Chapter Retreat will be held at Deer Creek State Park, starting with breakfast on Saturday at 8:30 a.m. and finishing on Sunday at 3 p.m. This retreat is open to any Ohio Chapter member who is interested in attending. The retreat will feature great sessions on energy, transportation, water, fracking, forests, coal, and nuclear issues, as well as a hike on Saturday afternoon. (Visit ohiosierraclub.org for a more detailed agenda.)

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be provided on Saturday. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on Sunday. Accommodations and food are free to attendees who are members of Sierra Club.

You must make your own room reservation by calling 800-282-7275. Tell them you are attending the Ohio Chapter Sierra Club retreat to get our room rate of \$59 plus tax per night. You may stay over Friday night as well as Saturday night. We will reimburse each attendee 1/2 the room rate for Friday and Saturday nights as we expect you to share a room. Please make your own sharing arrangement. We will have a reimbursement form at the retreat.

To attend the retreat, please notify Enid Nagel so we can have a count for meals. Please feel free to contact Enid if you have any questions. Email [enidsierra\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:enidsierra(at)yahoo.com) or call: 513-886-0333.

Remembering Our Dear Friend Jerry Kramer: 1947-2011

By Pat Marida

It is with great sadness that we report to our members the loss of long-time Central Ohio Sierra Club outings and backpack leader Jerry Kramer. His death on Nov. 1 followed a short battle with cancer.

Many Sierrans enjoyed the hikes and backpack trips organized by this extraordinary hiking leader through the 1990s and early 2000s. Jerry's gentle ways, fun and inquisitive attitude, and outdoor skills combined to make his outings really first-rate. An avid outdoorsman, some of Jerry's favorite backpack spots were Dolly Sods and Otter Creek in West Virginia. Always curious, he loved to hike off the beaten path.

Besides serving on the Sierra Club Outings Committee, Jerry was a member of the Executive Committee and served as the Group Secretary for four years. With his interest and background in youth activities, he later headed

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Chair's Corner



"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world." — John Muir

As we begin a new year, I find it helpful to start literally from our roots. John Muir is our founder and a man who dedicated his life to saving what is all around us. Muir's biographer Donald Worster summed up his legacy as "saving the American soul from total surrender to materialism." Muir also believed, as I always have, that nature is a place where even the spiritual can reside most freely. Regardless of our faith traditions, one cannot feel closer to something larger than oneself than when in nature.

I like to ponder what moves me to action each day. Why do we keep fighting when broad rivers and mountains stand in our way? Within this question lies its own answer, which John Muir taught us. The rivers and mountains are not barriers – we are but co-habitants of the world. We should embrace, share and love the creation of which we are blessed to be a part. Within this issue, you will see some ways that our local club has kept up the fight over the past year in central Ohio and won. We didn't do it by fighting the barriers in our way – we did it by negotiating, spending hard hours at the bargaining table, and showing how our efforts are mutually beneficial to all parties involved.

If there appears to be a mountain blocking you in your personal journey, resolve this year not to stand at the base of the mountain and not try to fight it. Climb it! Don't throw up your arms in despair when there's a river before you. Swim it! Let's take John Muir's lessons to heart in 2012. You and I are attached to all of nature. The more we can become one, the more success we will find, and the more at peace with the world we will become.

Regards, David Donofrio
Chair, Sierra Club Central Ohio Group

Central Ohio Group Executive Committee Members Elected

At our December Holiday Party, returning members of the Executive Committee publicly counted the ballots of members who wished to vote for our new Executive Committee members. Five seats were open. After tabulating results, the Sierra Club Central Ohio Group would like to congratulate the following five candidates, who have been elected to full two (2) year terms of service on the Executive Committee for 2012-2013! They are:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Amber Bellamy | Melanie Braithwaite |
| Kalen Cap | Sarah Cercone |
| Alicia Wooten-Cherry | |

We look forward to your insight and contribution during the coming two years! Congratulations!
—The Sierra Club Central Ohio Group

Sierra Club Meetings

Central Ohio Group (COG) Executive Committee

*First Wednesdays: Jan. 4 and Feb. 1
at 6:45pm*

Meets the first Wednesday of most months at Consider Biking, 4041 N. High St., Suite 201. Contact COG Chair David Donofrio at 614-327-6310, [daviddonofrio1\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:daviddonofrio1@gmail.com) for more information or if you have an agenda item.

COG Conservation Committee *Third Wednesdays: Jan. 18 and Feb. 15 at 7 pm*

Conservation activists, interested members, and others meet on the third Wed. of most months at the downtown Sierra Club office, 131 N. High St. Press the intercom and someone will let you in. Contact COG ConsCom Chair Alicia Wooten-Cherry at [mukkie145\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:mukkie145@yahoo.com) for more information or if you have an agenda item.

COG Political Committee *Members needed!*

Committee members interview Central Ohio candidates and make recommendations for endorsements. The committee also meets with elected officials to keep them informed of the Group's position on local issues. There are often speakers at these meetings. Contact Melanie Braithwaite 614-326-4670, [melbraithwaite\(at\)aol.com](mailto:melbraithwaite@aol.com) for more information about meetings.

Ohio Chapter Conservation and Executive Committees

*Sat.-Sun., Jan. 21-22 at the
Sierra Club Ohio Chapter Retreat*

These committee meetings will take place at the chapter retreat instead of at the Ohio Sierra Club office in downtown Columbus. Refer to the article on page 1 for more information.

Saving the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park From Columbia Gas

By Kevin Howells, Ohio Sierra Club Clean Water Fellow,
with Susan Belair

In early December the Ohio State University decided not to allow an easement for Columbia Gas to install a 20-inch, high-pressure natural gas transmission pipeline beneath the Wilma H. Schiermeier Olentangy River Wetland Research Park (ORWRP). The decision was made after a third-party consulting firm presented a risk assessment. The pipeline was found to present serious risks to the wetlands.

In addition to the risk assessment, the university has been under pressure from concerned activists to deny the easement. During autumn quarter of 2011, Ohio Sierra Club Clean Water Fellow Kevin Howells conducted a thorough research project that focused on this pipeline issue, with his research group assuming the position of a third-party risk assessment team. They wrote a 20-page research paper and presented their findings before a group of Ohio State decision makers, including the university's director of planning and its sustainability coordinator. The assistant director of the ORWRP, Dr. Li Zhang, was also in attendance.

The research group concluded that the preferred route proposed by Columbia Gas posed too many risks. The unstable geology of the highly weathered layer of limestone beneath the wetlands could lead to numerous problems, including the need for invasive machinery and the open cutting of a trench to access the pipeline. Presently, there are seven ongoing research projects occurring at the wetlands, including a study on methane generation by the wetlands, and these studies are extremely sensitive. Leakage from the pipeline could impact these studies and compromise the results. What's more, the pipeline carries a high risk for disrupting the ecology of the area.

The ORWRP has been designated a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance; it is one of only thirty such sites in the United States. Furthermore, portions of the wetlands were constructed with funds from mitigation projects for wetlands that were destroyed elsewhere.

The Ohio State University's Office of Planning should be commended for requesting and listening to impartial, research-based opinions and for making a decision that will preserve the value of the wetlands.

Additional note from Ben Wickizer: Hooray – we won the battle, but the war's not over!

While Ohio State University made the decision not to grant NiSource/Columbia Gas's request for an easement under the Wilma H. Schiermeier Wetlands Research Park,

ACTION STILL NEEDED TO PROTECT THE OLENTANGY RIVER WETLANDS

NiSource/Columbia Gas still has options to overcome OSU's decision not to allow the pipeline to proceed under the Wetlands. You can help by attend the following meetings.

Tues., Jan. 10 The Ohio Power Siting Board will hold a public hearing on the pipeline at 6 pm at the Whetstone Park of Roses Shelter House, 3901 North High Street, down the road toward the river from the Whetstone Library. This is a chance for our members and supporters to make short statements opposing Columbia drilling under the wetlands and urging that they use their alternate route.

Thurs., Jan. 12 The Ohio Power Siting Board will hold an adjudicatory hearing on the pipeline at the offices of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), 180 E. Broad St. in Columbus. The hearing will begin at 10 am. Having pipeline opponents attend the hearing will show the board that there is strong community pressure for saving the wetlands.

For more information on the pipeline, contact Kevin Howells, Ohio Sierra Club Clean Water Fellow, at [howells.23\(at\)osu.edu](mailto:howells.23(at)osu.edu) or by phone at (330) 774-

concerns still exist about whether this will stymie Columbia Gas's efforts to locate the pipeline beneath the wetlands. There are a number of reasons why these concerns remain, including that *the wetlands are not actually owned by the university* but rather the state of Ohio; *utilities in Ohio have the ability to procure easements through eminent domain*; and the Ohio Power Siting Board regularly brokers settlements that do not put due emphasis on environmental health and integrity.

As a result of these remaining worries, the Ohio Chapter Sierra Club has decided to intervene in the case before the Ohio Power Siting Board. The Chapter wants to ensure that the pipeline does not negatively impact the wetlands or the Olentangy River and surrounding environment. And, although OSU's denial of the easement was a victory, the fight to protect the area is not yet over.

Please remember, there is a public meeting on January 10 at 6 pm at the Whetstone Park of Roses Shelter House where individuals can voice their opinions on the project.

Ohio's Water Sentinel Program Works to Expose Fracking

By Matt Trokan

As one of 51 Sierra Club Water Sentinels Programs, the Ohio Chapter's Clean Water Campaign has encouraged local groups and individuals to become Water Sentinels. Water Sentinels are given the tools and knowledge to monitor their water for pollution, like "fracking fluid". Since 2010, the program has grown rapidly throughout the state as the numbers of participants, type of equipment, and availability of trainings has increased. It is exciting to see the program become successful and tackling important issues like "fracking."

"Fracking" is a new unconventional type of horizontal directional drilling for natural gas and oil production, which uses millions of gallons of pressurized water to extract natural resources. Ohio has hundreds of wells permitted across Ohio that are producing millions of gallons of hazardous wastewater that cannot currently be disposed of properly. As concerned citizens have become aware of the hundreds of chemicals used in the "fracking" process and the threat posed to their drinking water many people have contacted the Sierra Club to learn what they can do.



Water monitoring kit

The Clean Water Campaign is training members how to use water monitoring equipment to detect changes in their water quality. Participants who sign up to be Water Sentinels receive a free water monitoring kit (worth over \$100).

We currently have over 25 Water Sentinels actively collecting data. With funding in place, we hope to add 100 new Water Sentinels in 2012.

If you are interested in becoming a Water Sentinel, please join us at a training in your area! If you don't see your area listed below, please contact us at cleanwatersierraclub@gmail.com to schedule a training near you. Together we can all make a difference.

Chapter Retreat: Jan. 21st and 22nd 9am-5pm, [Deer Creek Lodge and Conference Center](#)

Cincinnati area: Feb. 18th 9am-12pm, Imago Nature Preserve, 700 Enright ave, Price Hill, 45205

ECTester 400 (frack finders) is a handheld unit that tests for temperature, salinity, total dissolved solids, and conductivity indicating the presence of heavy metals, salts, and other contaminates.



Does Fracking Cause Earthquakes?

By Madeline Shaw

Never had an earthquake been reported in Mahoning County before March, 2011. Since that date, eight quakes have been recorded, seven of which had an epicenter traceable to a brine injection well near Youngstown used for fracking. Hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking", is the process by which gas is produced from shale and is the culprit for pollution where fracking wells have been drilled.

Rapid deployment of these wells has been accompanied by an unusual rise in recorded seismic activity. The earthquakes here in Ohio and elsewhere in the country have certainly made news. "Fracking Has Formerly Stable Ohio City Aquifer Over Spate of Earthquakes," said a headline in *Bloomberg News* in December, 2011. A similar story on the Youngstown quakes ("Add Quakes to Rumbblings Over Gas Rush") also appeared at about the same time in the *New York Times*. Indeed, Oklahoma had a record 1,047 quakes in 2010, when in years prior to 2009 the average numbered roughly 50. Arkansas re-

ported 100 quakes over a mere seven-day period before authorities decided to shut down two injection wells in 2011. Although all the Youngstown quakes ranged between 2.1 and 2.6 on the Richter scale and were not harmful, it did not take a gigantic leap of imagination in most minds to wonder if the earthquakes also had any relation to the nearby injection well.

Responses from well operators around the country have fallen, of course, on the side of a resounding "no". The environmental community is of the other opinion. But the questions that several states, including Ohio, are posing about a possible link between the quakes and fracking are spurring efforts to settle the question scientifically.

On December 7, 2011, Deputy director Andy Ware of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources announced that four new seismographs had been set up in the Youngstown area to help determine whether earthquakes in northeast Ohio are the result of injection under pressure of brine wastewater used in natural gas drilling into the well. That is a small step in the right direction.

Dispatches From the Stream

By Ben Wickizer, Ohio Sierra Club Conservation Program Coordinator

Comprehensive, holistic planning is fundamental to maintaining the health and equilibrium of any resource; this includes watersheds. Traditionally, resources have been compartmentalized and planning and development have been largely executed in single sectors, such as transportation, sewers, zoning, etc. However, this planning approach is one-dimensional and leaves much to be desired, as these different sectors are interrelated and their effects are linked.

These effects are particularly relevant for watersheds, as watersheds have a myriad of variables that are connected to their health, making a monochromatic approach less effective for protecting water resources and a bioregional approach superior. Instead of planning development by sector, as has been done in the past, development should be executed and planned on a watershed basis. This provides a better lens for analyzing the potential effects of development and also allows the synergies that exist between sectors to be accounted for, increasing the likelihood that a watershed's health and interests will be best served.

Excitingly, this holistic planning approach, termed "balanced growth," is currently occurring on some of our watersheds in central Ohio as a result of Ohio's **Balanced Growth Program**. The Balanced Growth Program is a voluntary opt-in initiative in which communities choose to participate and can receive rewards for their participa-

tion. Five different central Ohio watersheds – Olentangy, Big Walnut, Walnut Creek, Upper Scioto, Whetstone – have balanced growth plans administered by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC).

The 2011 Olentangy plan was recently released after years of work by MORPC, municipalities and townships, and stakeholder groups. Although the Olentangy is designated as a state scenic river, it was listed in 2006 as an impaired waterway (compromised by pollution), illustrating the need for prudent planning. The plan designates priority areas in each community and provides incentives to encourage land use decisions consistent with the needs of these areas. The plan also provides communities an array of tools that they can use to pursue sensible development and protect the Olentangy watershed.

Balanced growth initiatives such as this have the potential to protect and improve our waterways while fostering efficient, sustainable development. The next step in the effort to improve central Ohio's waterways through balanced growth is designation of an organization to assume the regional planning duties for central Ohio. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) currently performs these duties for central Ohio, but it lacks the resources and capacity to fully fulfill the intent of the program. The logical group to assume this role in place of the OEPA is MORPC, but it can only happen if central Ohio municipalities and communities, such as the City of Columbus, agree to vest this responsibility in MORPC and provide the necessary funding.

To access the Olentangy plan, or any of the other Balanced Growth Plans, visit <http://balancedgrowthplanning.morpc.org/>

Get Green Columbus: Become a Green Spot

By Susan Belair

You, too, can become a Green Spot.

A part of Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman's *Get Green Columbus* initiative, the GreenSpot program encourages individuals, organizations, and businesses to adopt green behaviors. To become a GreenSpot member, you apply online (www.columbusgreenspot.org) and pledge to make three lifestyle changes. The website offers suggestions — nothing radical — such as driving ten fewer miles per week or turning your thermostat down.

After your application is accepted, you will receive a welcome letter and GreenSpot decal in the mail, which you can proudly display to show you are another spot of green in the city. The process works on the honor system; no one will check to see if you are really recycling or biking to work. The main inducement for joining may be the

opportunity to educate and encourage others to get on board with green lifestyle changes.

Besides tips for greening your lifestyle, the website has contact information. Also make sure to check the SPOTlight page for some awe-inspiring stories. My personal favorite is about Montgomery Grey, a fifth-grader who is working to improve water quality.

The GreenSpot website also has a long list of businesses and organizations that have become GreenSpots, with their addresses and locations mapped. A few, randomly-selected retail GreenSpots are Surly Girl Saloon, ECO-tastic Clothes and Living, Giant Eagle, Spinelli's Deli, and Mr. Mulch. Some organizations listed include Actors Theater, Devonshire Elementary, the Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio, and Wagenbrenner Company Realty.

Outings: January/February

Outings are open to all; you do not have to be a member of the Sierra Club to participate. In fact, if you are interested in joining the Sierra club, we encourage you to go on an outing and get to know some Sierrans. We think you're likely to come back! To aid you in selecting outings that fit your experience and fitness levels, please see our Outings Rating System.

- *The general policy of Sierra Club is that dogs not be taken on hikes unless the write-up mentions that they may be included.*
- *In order to participate in one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver.*
- *Outings are free of charge unless otherwise noted.*
- *We support energy conservation and carpooling wherever possible and appropriate. Participants may voluntarily contribute gas money to the driver.*

Outings Rating System

Each outing is rated twice. Both scales are one to five; the E scale indicates the required experience level and the S scale shows the physical activity level anticipated.

E Scale

- 1 Novice - no experience required.
- 2 A little experience is required.
- 3 Moderate experience required.
- 4 Considerable experience required.
- 5 For the very experienced only.

S Scale

- 1 Not strenuous.
- 2 Could be strenuous.
- 3 Somewhat strenuous.
- 4 Strenuous.
- 5 Very strenuous.

If you are interested in an outing but are unsure if you can manage it or if you wish to meet the group at the trailhead instead of the assembly point, call the leader and discuss the trip in greater detail. Be advised that many day hikes are 10 miles or longer and require proper equipment. Here's a list of what you should bring:

1. Sturdy hiking boots or shoes. Make sure your footwear is broken in before you attempt a 10-mile hike.
2. Clothing appropriate to the season. Layering works best in cold weather to prevent overheating. Raingear is essential for comfort as hikes may proceed rain or shine.
3. A small first aid kit with band-aids or moleskin for blisters.
4. At least one liter of water (two liters in warm weather). Note that water is usually not available on the trail.
5. Snacks or lunch if mentioned in the hike description.

Hike leaders reserve the right to deny participation to anyone deemed to be inadequately prepared.

Fri., January 6, 7 pm: Easton Towne Center Night Hike, Ratings: E/S 1/1 The holidays are finished and hopefully the frenzied shoppers are gone, too. We will walk the perimeter and the grounds. Colorful remnants of the recent extravaganza may still be in place. Meet at the northeast corner parking lot (north of The Container Store) at 4000 Worth Rd. and Easton Loop West. Leader: Chris Tisdale, 614-260-2109.



Sun., January 8, 11 am: Alum Creek State Park Dog Hike, Ratings: E/S 2/3 Everyone is welcome, with or without a dog. Alum Creek State Park is just a 10 minute drive from our meeting place. This 8-mile hike will take us over a variety of terrains from wooded trails to open meadows, wetlands, beaches and a marina. We'll also learn some interesting historical facts about the area and how Alum Creek Dam is part of the flood control plan for the Ohio River Basin. Meet at 11 am in the parking lot of Wal-Mart on the Northeast side of Route 23 just north of Powell Road. Hiking boots are a must, as we may encounter some wet and muddy areas on the trail. Bring a snack and water. Leader: Jim Halverson, [jimhalvey\(at\)aol.com](mailto:jimhalvey@aol.com), 614-325-6415.

Fri., January 13, 7 pm: New Albany Night Hike, Ratings: 2/2 Join us for a hike in New Albany as we walk around the prestigious New Albany golf club and the

surrounding neighborhoods. Meet at 7 pm at 200 Market Street in New Albany. You may park on the northeast corner of the library parking lot, which is the far right corner as you face the library. We suggest that you bring a flashlight and wear reflective clothing. An optional dinner follows the hike. Leader: Line Martineau, 614-749-1447, [linenmartineau\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:linenmartineau(at)gmail.com).

Sun., January 15, 11am and 1pm: Three Creeks Metro Park Day Hike, Ratings: E/S 2/2 The trails may be covered with snow. Dress with hiking boots for snow or mud, as trails are unimproved and we will be making tracks along the creeks. We will hike 3 miles per session. Meet at the Confluence bulletin board by the restrooms at 11am or 1pm. Three Creeks is located at 3860 Bixby Rd., Groveport. From I-270, take US 33 east to the South Hamilton Road exit. Turn right and go about 1 mile to Bixby Road and turn right. The entrance is about 1 mile on the right. Leader: Chris Tisdale, 614-260-2109.

Fri., January 20, 7 pm: Bexley Night Hike, Ratings: E/S/1/1 Join us for a 3-mile hike through the historic city of Bexley and a portion of Wolfe Park. We will meet at 7 pm at the parking lot of the Bexley Public Library, 2411 East Main Street. Optional dinner afterwards. Reflective clothing and shoes for

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Friday Night Hikes

Friday Night Hikes are a great way to unwind from a hectic week, a respite from the hurry, and a transition to a more relaxed weekend. There are usually 3 to 4 miles of brisk walking with an optional stop afterward for refreshments and conversation. When days are long, most of our Friday Night Hikes are in area Metro Parks. When days are short, we hike in lovely area neighborhoods. But wherever they are, Friday night Hikes are always wonderful. So, have some fun, make some friends, and meet some new people. Join us on a Friday Night Hike! Please note, however, that heavy weather generally cancels a Friday Night Hike. If it looks questionable, check with the leader for that particular hike.

(Outings, Continued from page 6)

uneven walkways are recommended. Leaders: David and Avalon Espinoza, 614-403-7849.

Sun., January 22, 9 am: Burr Oak State Park/Wildcat Hollow Day Hike, Ratings: 4/5 This valley area is typical of the southeast wilderness of Ohio. Carved by erosion of the Appalachian Mountain foothills, it is replete with ridges, rock formations, lakes, and a variety of flora and wildlife. The area's development stemmed from the historical nearby water transportation hubs, mining industries, and settlements by Civil War veterans who accepted land in payment for services. This hike of 9-11 miles will take us through the Burr Oak and/or Wildcat Hollow trails. Bring water, lunch, boots, suitable attire and meet at 9 am behind McDonald's at Winchester Square Shopping Center, near US 33 and Gender Road. Leader: Jose Cabral, 740-331-1161.

Fri., January 27, 7 pm: Upper Arlington Night Hike, Ratings: E/

S 1/1 We'll meet at 7 pm at the Lane Road branch of the Upper Arlington Public Library at 1945 Lane Rd. Not to be confused with Lane Ave., Lane Rd. runs east/west between Reed Rd. on the east and Riverside Dr. on the west and is a few blocks south of Henderson Rd. The library closes at 6 pm on Fri. so there will be no restrooms available. From the library we'll walk south through Lane Road Park to Johnston Rd. and then west toward the Scioto River. We'll return by way of Sheringham Rd. We'll have an optional dinner afterwards at one of the many nearby restaurants. Comfortable walking shoes, a flashlight and reflective clothing are recommended. Leaders: John and Marilyn Fiske. Contact John [jrob48\(at\)aol.com](mailto:jrob48(at)aol.com) or Marilyn [mjean49\(at\)aol.com](mailto:mjean49(at)aol.com), 614-457-3699 for further information.

Sun., January 29, 10 am: Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park Day Hike, Ratings: E/S 2/2 We will hike 5-6 miles through Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park. The hike will cover a variety of terrain, including forest and open meadows. Hiking boots are recommended because of the messy winter conditions that January usually brings to central Ohio. Bring water and a snack. Meet at 10 am near the restrooms at the Cedar Ridge picnic area. The Cedar Ridge picnic area is accessed via the main (north) entrance to the park, which is on Darby Creek Rd. about 3 miles south of Broad St. (US 40). Leaders: John [jrob48\(at\)aol.com](mailto:jrob48(at)aol.com) or Marilyn [mjean49\(at\)aol.com](mailto:mjean49(at)aol.com), 614-457-3699.

Fri., February 3, 7 pm: Grandview Night Hike, Ratings: E/S 1/1 We will take a neighborhood walk through Grandview. Meet promptly at 7 pm in the parking lot of the Grandview library on First Ave, two blocks west of Grandview Ave. After the hike, we will have dinner in a Grandview

restaurant. Reflective clothing is recommended. Leaders: George Huntley, 614-444-1970, and Barbara Daniel.

Sun., February 5, 11 am and 1 pm: Blacklick Woods Metro Park Day Hike, Ratings: E/S 1/1 Blacklick Woods is the oldest metro park in central Ohio. It has over 600 acres, including a golf course that is also used for sledding and skiing in the winter. We will walk on mulch or asphalt for 3 miles a session. Meet at the Nature Center. Bring a snack or lunch if walking both sessions. Blacklick Woods is located at 6975 E. Livingston Ave. Leader: Chris Tisdale: 614-260-2109.

Fri., February 10, 7 pm: Victorian Village Night Hike, Ratings: E/S 1/1 Meet at 7 pm at the Dennison Avenue parking lot of Goodale Park. We will walk about 3 miles through Victorian Village and the south OSU campus area. Enjoy an optional dinner in the area afterwards. Reflective clothing is recommended. Leaders: Jim and Ellen McDonald, 614-262-2666, [jmcdonald121\(at\)aol.com](mailto:jmcdonald121(at)aol.com).

Sun., February 12, 9 am: Mohican State Park Day Hike. Rating E/S4/4 This hike of 10+ miles takes us along the trails of the Clear Fork River and ridges that form the Clear Fork Gorge. The gorge originated from the erosion of the moraines, rock till and deposits of the Wisconsin glacier. Today the wildlife and old growth white pine, hemlocks, hickory, a variety of oak and maple, all comprise an area designated as a National Natural Landmark. Bring water, lunch, hiking boots, suitable attire and meet at 9 am in the far end of Target's parking lot on Polaris Parkway, west of exit #121 on I-71 north of Columbus. Leader: Jose Cabral, 740-331-1161.

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Outings

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Fri., February 17, 7 pm: Gahanna Creekside Night Hike, Ratings: E/S 1/2 Explore the old and the new Gahanna on this hike along the boardwalk of Creekside Park. Meet at the VFW Park, 75 W. Johnstown Rd., on the southwest corner of Big Walnut Creek off Granville Rd. Take 62E from 270 turn right at the light then left on Johnstown and follow east to the creek and parking. Leader: Chris Tisdale 614-260-2109.



Sun., February 19, 9 am: Hocking Hills Day Hike, Ratings: E/S 3/4 This is a *dog-friendly* hike. The scenery in and around Old Man's Cave, Cedar Falls, Rose Lake, and Ash Cave is unequalled for its beauty and serenity. You will see and learn about the gritty, reddish stone, called Blackhand Sandstone, and how it was left behind more than 200 million years ago when Ohio's ancient ocean drained from the land. We will be hiking 12 miles at a brisk pace and tackling some challenging hills, so please be aware of your hiking abilities and limitations. Bring lunch, water and hiking boots and meet at 9 am behind McDonald's at Route 33 and Gender Rd. Leader: Jim Halverson, 614-325-6415, [jimhalvey\(at\)aol.com](mailto:jimhalvey(at)aol.com). **Note: This hike may be cancelled due to conditions.** Call the hike leader prior to driving to the meeting point if the weather is questionable.

Fri., February 24, 7 pm: Clintonville Night Hike, Ratings: E/S 1/1 Meet at 7 pm at the Whetstone Library parking lot in Clintonville, just off High Street, by the entrance to the Park of Roses. We will walk through Clintonville and then enjoy an optional dinner in a nearby restaurant afterward. Dress warmly and **BRING A FLASHLIGHT**. Leader: Tom Ruf,

614-406-5336, [tomruf85\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:tomruf85(at)yahoo.com).



Sun., February 26, 10 am: Delaware State Park Day Hike, Ratings: E/S 2/2 This is a dog-friendly hike of 5-8 miles depending on the weather and trail conditions. The wooded terrain is mostly flat with a few rolling hills. Hiking boots are recommended because of the snowy, icy, muddy, and/or wet conditions that January often brings to central Ohio. Pack water and lunch or snacks for the trail. Meet at 10 am at the west end of the Wal-Mart parking lot in North Pointe Plaza shopping center, which is on the east side of US RT 23 about 1/2 mile north of SR 750 (Powell Road). Leader: Dave Dorsky, 614-848-7879, [valordave\(at\)hotmail.com](mailto:valordave(at)hotmail.com). **Note: This hike may be cancelled due to conditions.** Call the hike leader prior to driving to the meeting point if the weather is questionable.

Fri., March 2, 7 pm: New Albany Night Hike, Ratings: 2/2 Join us for a hike in New Albany as we walk around the prestigious New Albany golf club and the surrounding neighborhoods. Meet at 7 pm at 200 Market Street in New Albany. You may park on the northeast corner of the library parking lot, which is the far right corner as you face the library. We suggest that you bring a flashlight and wear reflective clothing. An optional dinner follows the hike. Leader: Line Martineau, 614-749-1447, [linemartineau\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:linemartineau(at)gmail.com).

Sun., March 4, 11 am and 1 pm: Inniswood Metro Park Day Hike, Ratings: E/S 1/1 See what might be in bloom in anticipation of spring. Meet at the sheltered entry by the parking lot. Inniswood is at 940 S.Hempstead Rd., Westerville. Dress for the weather and bring a snack or lunch if walking both sessions of 3

miles. Leader: Chris Tisdale 614-260-2109.

Wednesday, March 7, 6:30 pm: Franklin Park Evening Walk, Ratings: E/S 1/1 Join us for an hour of walking leisurely through this scenic park close to downtown Columbus. The Conservatory at 1777 E. Broad St. is open from 5-8 pm during Community Night (free) even if weather conditions are unpleasant. Meet inside the east entrance on the lower level (left of doors). Leader: Chris Tisdale 614-260-2109.

Fri., March 9, 7 pm: German Village Night Hike, Ratings: E/S 2/2 Join us for a walk through historic German Village. We will walk around the German Village neighborhoods and visit Fetch Park. Meet at Schiller Park (Deshler and Jaeger) at 7 pm. We will be walking about 3 miles and will stop for an optional dinner at a local area restaurant. Wear sturdy footwear appropriate for uneven walking surfaces. Reflective clothing is recommended. Leader: George Huntley, 614-444-1970.

Sun., March 11, 11 am, **EDT BEGINS:** **Highbanks Metro Park Day Hike, Ratings: E/S 2/2** Highbanks is named for its massive shale bluffs that tower over the Olentangy State Scenic River. The park is rich in Native American history as it contains two Adena Indian burial mounds and a prehistoric earthwork. We will hike 5 to 6 miles that include some small but steep hills. Sturdy footwear is needed for possible wet or muddy conditions. Bring lunch or a snack and meet at the Nature Center at 11 am. Leader: Dave Dorsky, 614-848-7879, [valordave\(at\)hotmail.com](mailto:valordave(at)hotmail.com).



Remembering Jerry Kramer

Continued from page 1

up a COG Inner City Outings Committee that took older elementary children to the Hoover Y Camp in Lockbourne.

Jerry was a graduate of the Ohio State University. In his career as a social worker, Jerry worked in youth services at the Buckeye Ranch, the Hannah Neil Center for Children (now Starr Columbus), and the United Methodist Children’s Home in Columbus. At the time of his death he was the Residential Services Director for Oesterlen Services for Youth in Springfield. His calm and quiet temperament and active interest in the welfare of young people made him ideally suited for this work.

Jerry and his wife Bev Eck got to know each other on outdoor adventures, and subsequently spent a lot of time hiking and back-packing together.

His family has named the Sierra Club as an organization to which contributions may be made in his memory. Contributions to the Central Ohio Sierra Club may be sent to Kathy O’Keeffe, treasurer, Central Ohio Sierra Club, 145 E. Kelso Rd., Columbus, OH 43202.



Above: Jerry Kramer, camping with Bev.



*Pictured here: Some Central Ohio Group members, on a late autumn guided walk of **Inniswood Metro Park** organized by Publicity Chair Yang Xing. The colors were beautiful! Join us for another social gathering in the future.*



He's Not Your Everyday Garbage Man

By Sarah Kafer

A warehouse property on Maier Place is a lone reminder that an industrial district ever dominated the Whittier Peninsula. The Grange Insurance Audubon Center and Scioto Audubon Metro Park now distinguish this former brownfield site as a gem of an urban recovery project.

But even within this warehouse, great “green” things are happening. Tucked away in Bay 15 is Eartha Limited, an innovative food recycling operation that is the brainchild of former event planner Mike Minnix. Eartha’s self-proclaimed “Chief Dumpster Diver,” Minnix once managed environmental programs for Super Bowls, the Ohio State Fair and other large events. He saw a need for improved waste management in food service operations and decided to do something about it. When he met restaurateur Elizabeth Lessner about two years ago, he found a partner who shared his interest in food service sustainability. Eartha Limited became a reality, and the restaurants of Lessner’s Columbus Food League — Surly Girl Saloon, Betty’s, Tip-Top Kitchen and others — became its first providers of waste to be recycled. Making Eartha work wasn’t a piece of cake, though. It wasn’t until SWACO agreed earlier this year to lift restrictions and fees on food scrap hauling that Eartha could handle and process what is generally considered to be municipal waste.

Eartha’s goal is to reduce the amount of food and related waste that makes its way into landfills from restaurants, schools, hospitals, entertainment venues and similar operations. Some of the waste collected by Eartha is trucked to nearby farms for composting; some makes its way to an anaerobic digester that converts it into energy

and produces a soil-enriching fertilizer. A filter at the warehouse cleans waste vegetable oil to make biodiesel. And while the heart of Eartha’s operation is combatting food waste, its community recycling efforts extend beyond. “Candles with a Cause” operates out of Eartha’s warehouse, turning glass bottles from restaurants and two local distilleries into Ohio-sourced soy wax candles that are sold to benefit local nonprofits and charities. Eartha also offers a large selection of compostable “bio-products” that includes cups, plates, utensils and straws that will return to the earth in 30-60 days whereas chemical-filled Styrofoam and plastic can take hundreds of years to decompose.

Eartha is still young – its staff currently includes only Mike, an Office Manager/Sales Assistant and a handful of part-time laborers. It’s clear that there is demand for its services that should only continue to grow as more businesses take notice and go green. Learn more about Eartha at www.earthalimited.com.



Navigating Central Ohio’s Greenways by Trail

By Susan Belair

Central Ohio has more than 100 miles of continuous trails, stretching from Blacklick to Hilliard, Groveport to Westerville and elsewhere. Now, thanks to a joint effort between the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and greenway planners, parks departments and local trail groups, popular local trails across a 12-county area have been connected through MORPC’s **Central Ohio Greenways** program. They include the following trails:

Alum Creek	Big Walnut
Blacklick	Darby Creek
Heritage	I-670
Ohio-to-Erie	Olentangy
Scioto	



Check out the exciting new Greenways website, www.centralohiogreenways.com, for maps of the trails with the addresses of the trailheads. The site also provides alerts about trail closings or detours. All Greenways trails can be used by bikers and walkers.

Under *Community Resources* on the website, there is up-to-date information on continuing trail development. (In 2011 construction was begun on more than seven additional miles of Big Walnut Trail!) According to a Greenways spokesperson, the dates listed are the projected start dates, and once a project is completed it is removed from the list.

Contact the Greenways program with questions or comments through the website, or by contacting one of their supporting groups, such as FLOW (www.olentangywatershed.org) or FACT (<http://friendsofalumcreek.org>).

Non-Sierra Club Community Events

The following activities are not sponsored nor administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published because they may be of interest to our readers. These events are all open to the public. They are free unless otherwise noted.

Mon., Jan. 9, 7:30 pm – Bed Bugs: The Resurgence of Infestations, Columbus Natural History Society program. Museum of Biological Diversity, 1315 Kinnear Rd., Columbus, 43212. Presentation by George Keeney, OSU Research Associate, Aronoff Laboratory. <http://columbusnaturalhistory.org>

Sat., Jan. 14, 10 am – Creating Bog Gardens, Rainwater Harvesting, and Protecting Habitats along Waterways, Wild Ones Program. Inniswood Metro Park, Westerville, Ohio. Speaker: Stephanie Suter, Habitat Conservationist, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District. <http://www.for-wild.org/chapters/columbus/>

Sat., Jan. 28, 8:30 am–noon – Grafting the Right Way, Dawes Arboretum Zand Education Center, 7770 Jackson-town Rd., Newark, OH 43056. The Arboretum's propagator, Richard Larson, instructs students on the art and science of grafting to ensure future success in reproducing their own plants. Rootstock and scion wood are provided, though

attendees may bring their own scion wood as well. All participants take home their own grafted material to nurture at home. Please note: no class vouchers accepted. Cost \$40, registration required. Visit www.dawesarb.org for information and registration.

Sat., Feb. 11, 10 am – Back to Basic Pruning Concepts, Wild Ones Program. Inniswood Metro Park, Westerville, Ohio. Presentation by Sharon Treaster will cover capabilities and limits of commonly used pruning tools. Ms. Treaster is on the Horticulture and Crop Science Staff at the Ohio State University and Chadwick Arboretum. <http://www.for-wild.org/chapters/columbus/>

Mon., Feb. 13, 7:30 pm – Corpse Flower: The Bloom of a Titan, Columbus Natural History Society program, Museum of Biological Diversity, 1315 Kinnear Rd., Columbus, 43212. Speaker Joan Leonard, Greenhouse Coordinator, OSU Biological Sciences Greenhouse. <http://columbusnaturalhistory.org>

Sat.-Sun., Feb. 18-19 – Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Assn. Conference: Sowing the Seeds of Our Food Sovereignty, Granville, OH. Featuring keynote speakers Woody Tasch, chairman of the Slow Money Alliance, and Andrew Kimbrell, founder and executive director of the Center for Food Safety, plus more than 70 workshops, local and organic meals, kids' conference, childcare, trade show, and more. Pre-conference event Fri., Feb. 17. Single-day and full-conference rates available. Visit www.oeffa.org

Columbus Metro Parks Winter Hikes 2012

Columbus Metro Parks' 39th season of Winter Hikes gets underway Jan. 7 at Blacklick Woods and runs through Feb 25. These hikes at thirteen different parks include guided and self-guided hikes from 1 mile up to 7 miles long. Refreshments are provided after every hike. Complete 7 hikes for a decorative patch. For more information, park locations and maps, visit www.metroparks.net.

Vernal Pool Workshop Registration Open

It's not too early to think about spring peepers! Registration is open for the **Vernal Pool Workshop** offered by Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) and the Ohio Vernal Pool Partnership (OVPP) on March 31. It will offer backyard scientists, nature lovers, and landowners a peek at seasonal vernal pools (www.theoec.org/WaterVernalPools.htm).

These seasonal wetlands form in late winter and early spring, and disappear in fall. They are home to a diverse collection of amphibians, insects, and crustaceans, including the dynamic fairy shrimp.

Participants will:

- Enjoy an expertly guided field trip to a vernal

pool.

- Learn the threats facing these important seasonal wetlands.
- Identify salamanders and the different calls of frogs.
- Learn about the different macroinvertebrates and plants that call vernal pools home.
- Learn how and why to collect vernal pool data.

The workshop will be held at the Stratford Ecological Center in Delaware, Ohio. Cost for the workshop is \$20 and includes a one-year OEC membership, lunch and informational materials. Space is limited! Register at <http://www.theoec.org/VP2012.htm>.



Ohio Environmental Council

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