

Save the Pine Bush

January/February Newsletter

Jan/Feb 12 No. 110 • 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 Wednesday, January 18, 6:00 p.m.

The Movie

The Rapp Road Community: People and History *will be shown*

The movie is about the historical and social significance of Albany's Rapp Road and the Pine bush. Most of the community's original residents migrated from Shubuta, Mississippi to Albany, NY in the 1930s and 1940s. The movie includes interviews with several original residents of the migration. The movie was made by Beverly Bardequez, Rapp Road community resident who worked with Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center staff and Dr. Jennifer Lemak, Senior Historian and Curator of African American History at the NYS Museum. The movie includes video interviews with several original residents of the migration. The project was sponsored by Friends of the Pine Bush Community with grant support from the Bender Family Foundation. Don't miss this fascinating piece of Pine Bush history!

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 \$10 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.

January Winter Walk Saturday January 21, 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: Andy Arthur

For more information: call John Wolcott at 465-8930

Bring: Skis or snow shoes — weather permitting. If no snow, we will walk.

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.

www.savethepinebush.org

Archaeology in the Pine Bush

by Tom Ellis

ALBANY: Derrick Marcucci of Landmark Archeology was the featured speaker at the November 16 SPB dinner at the Westminster Presbyterian Church. He said most of his firm's Pine Bush work involves development proposals, the number of which have dropped off quite a bit in the past three years. The Pine Bush he said, has been a natural corridor between the Hudson and Mohawk River valleys, was once 40 square miles, and is a unique ecosystem.

Developers, he said, sometimes hire second-rate archaeologists, hoping they will find little or nothing. About 100 archaeological surveys have so far been conducted in the Pine Bush. Non-professional archaeologists also make important discoveries. Human artifacts more than 10,000 years old have been found in the Pine Bush. These earliest prehistoric peoples were

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Save the Pine Bush GIS Class

ALBANY: On Saturday, January 21st at 2-4 PM, Save the Pine Bush will be having a class on using the free Quantum GIS program to make maps of the Albany Pine Bush and other public lands at the Delaware Ave Branch of Albany Public Library. GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems, the computer-based method of creating maps. This class will be taught by SPB volunteer Andy Arthur.

Topics to be covered include the installing free Quantum GIS (QGIS) on your home computer, loading NYSDOT topographic maps, loading trail and other data downloaded from government agency websites. We will discuss how to save and print maps. We will also discuss how to review government documents for map data, and how to request GIS map layers via e-mail, using the Freedom of Information Law.

It is recommend, but not required, that you bring a laptop with Wireless Internet to follow along in the class. Handouts will be provided and the program will be projected on a screen.

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Archaeology - Continued from Page 1

hunters and gatherers, not farmers; no known villages have been found except those from the late pre-historic era.

The earliest area residents, Paleo-Indians, who lived from 12,000-to-10,000 years ago, hunted many animals including elephants. Winters were long, shelters were vitally important to their survival, they probably lived in small groups, and their life expectancy may have been only 25-to-30 years. He said with current technology, blood residues found on artifacts such as arrowheads can be examined and the animals killed identified by species. He said agriculture in this region began quite recently, about 1200 years ago.

Mr. Marcucci said an "explosion of sites" from the Late Archaic period (6000 to 3000 years ago) have been found both regionally and nationally; these sites were inhabited by larger groups than earlier sites. He once examined a 3000-to-2000 year old site on the Mohawk River where ancient peoples likely lived in round houses, with sapling frames holding up roofs of hides and animal skins. He was fired from a dig at a large site of about 20 acres - the Vosburgh site - on the edge of the Pine Bush. It had 40 to 60 or more residents; the site is directly south of the Guilderland Town Hall, most of it is now a housing development, although the core of the site has been saved. He said being fired for the right reasons "is a badge of honor."

He said bows and arrows were a huge technological leap for ancient peoples because an individual hunter could kill game with them. Ceramics allowed for the storage of foods and more sedentary lifestyles.

There are 35 known Pine Bush sites from the historic period (post-Columbus), many sites are found along roads and at taverns on the roads. By the year 1800, the Great Western Turnpike (Route 20) traversed the Pine Bush, as did the Albany-Schenectady Road (Route 5). John Wolcott added that the Kings Highway may have originally been an Indian path.

Mr. Marcucci said archaeologists look at material objects in relation to time and space, archeology work is low-tech - shovels and screens.

He summarized saying prehistoric peoples likely did not live in the Pine Bush except very short-term for specific purposes such as hunting. Archaeological knowledge of the Pine Bush remains sketchy. He said archaeological work should not be salvage, as it often is, but done several years earlier, when the development proposal is made, not after permit approvals have been obtained and land clearings and excavations

begun. He said the city of "Albany will bulldoze anything." He said it seems sometimes like "no one cares."

A lively Q&A followed. Mr. Marcucci said the Environmental Impact Statement released two years ago by DEC regarding horizontal hydro-fracking "completely ignored" archaeological concerns despite a three-page letter sent NYS professional archaeologists. He said "Albany has never met a parking garage [proposal] it did not like." Lou Ismay said preservationists have so far failed to develop a sufficiently large constituency to demand and obtain historic preservation. Sylvia Barnard, recently terminated from the University at Albany as part of a downsizing that eliminated five departments after teaching courses about ancient Greece and Rome for forty years, said decades ago the university held an annual Community Day that brought people into the Pine Bush where they saw and learned about how beautiful and valuable it is. She said the Community Day does not exist anymore.

Late Fall Hike Report

No snow or ice so it was a hike

by Claire Nolan

ALBANY: We had three hikers join us for a chilly pre-Holiday stroll along the recently re-routed "Yellow Trail" behind the Pine Bush Discovery Center. Two more joined us for a mountain bike ride on the same trail. The two mountain bikers are students at UAlbany who came to the Pine Bush all the way from Japan.

As you may remember, the Pine Bush Commission decided to re-route the trails to eliminate the inner loops. Instead of several short connecting circuits, the Pine Bush trails will now be made up of a few large circles. The decision was made because the existing trail system adversely affects wildlife. Biologists have noted that although hikers are not as disruptive as roads and other development, birds and animals are more likely to settle in places where there is not too much human activity.

The trails behind the Discovery Center are very familiar to me. I like them because I can get into the Pine Bush for a quick walk or bike ride when I don't have too much time to explore other areas. On the old trail, I have often hiked to a pond that was not quite inside the "official" Pine Bush boundary. Imagine my surprise and delight when the newly designed trail led our group right to the pond! The pond, by the way, had a light layer of skim ice on December 17.

The dump is much more visible from the new trail but I believe that is an advantage. We should all see where our garbage goes and strive

to create less garbage to dump in our precious Pine Bush.

The trail is a bit rough in parts because it is new but it is interesting to hike in a familiar place that looks so different!

If you haven't visited the Pine Bush recently you will find some changes. The hike or ski to be led by Andy Arthur, avid hiker and knowledgeable outdoorsman, (<http://andyarthur.org>) on January 21 will be a perfect time to get reacquainted with an old friend undergoing a makeover.

Pesticide FOILS in process:

by Grace Nichols

ALBANY: For Save the Pine Bush, I foiled for the pesticide records from the City of Albany beginning in September. So far the City has only provided some rodenticide records for the city proper. Sadly, only one City site has replaced anti-coagulant rodenticides, a danger to hawks and other predators, with mechanical trapping. We have been successful in getting these out of the Pine Bush preserve and landfill itself.

In addition, the City Pesticide Management Board, with authority to grant waivers to pesticide laws for City departments, has held its first meeting. Though largely comprised of department heads who want waivers, there are still several members who have strongly advocated the City Golf Course complying with the Audubon International standards for green golf courses. We are looking forward to reductions in the City's pesticide usage and budget allocations.

Connection to the welfare of Pine Bush species

We have requested access to the records of all herbicides and other pesticides used at the Restoration over the landfill in the Pine Bush, where it is hoped rare species will go to live. So far, we haven't received these records, but we will keep insisting as these herbicides are paid for with City bond money.

In addition, the Restoration crew is responsible for reporting to the Common Council on how effective their work has been in promoting the growth of rare species in the new sand atop the landfill. We are all very interested in how it is going and if their model is working; we would like to know if they indeed intend to use fire up there, near the methane release, as some at the Commission have declared they would. We will report on these records as soon as we receive them, and of course, if we don't get them soon, you will hear about our ongoing fight to make Freedom of Information a reality.

The Common Council plans to review the results before approving funding for this year.

Sally's Recycling Corner — New Year Green Resolutions!

from *TheDailyGreen.com*

Give Up Plastic (and Paper) Bags

Cost: \$1

Do you opt for paper or plastic when at the grocery store? Neither is a good choice. Twelve million barrels of oil were used to make the 88.5 billion plastic bags consumed in the United States last year. And it takes four times more energy to make paper bags.

The best choice is reusable shopping bags made of cotton, nylon or durable, mesh-like plastic. Put a few reusable shopping bags in your car so you have them handy on your next shopping trip. And if you happen to forget your reusable bag (as we all do!), choose paper if you will recycle it or plastic if you will reuse or recycle it.

Avoid Waste: Recycle

Cost: \$0

For every trash can of waste you put outside for the trash collector, about 70 trash cans of waste are used in order to create that trash. To reduce the amount of waste you produce, buy products in returnable and recyclable containers and recycle as much as you can. The energy saved from recycling a single aluminum can will operate a television for three hours! If your community doesn't provide containers for recycling, designate a bin in your garage for recyclables to make it easy for you and your family to recycle things like the newspaper and aluminum cans.

Stop Buying Bottled Water

Cost: \$14.98 for aluminum water bottle

Did you know that it takes 26 bottles of water to produce the plastic container for a one-liter bottle of water, and that doing so pollutes 25 liters of groundwater? Don't leave a trail of plastic water bottles in your wake! Stop buying bottled water. Use reusable water bottles instead made from materials like stainless steel or aluminum that are not likely to degrade over time. If you choose a plastic water bottle, check the number on the bottom first: Plastics numbered 3, 6 and 7 could pose a health threat to you, so look for plastics numbered 1, 2, 4 or 5.

Stop Receiving Unwanted Catalogs

Cost: \$0

Each year, 19 billion catalogs are mailed to American consumers. All those catalogs require more than 53 million trees and 56 billion gallons of wastewater to produce -- and many of us don't even know how we got on so many mailing lists! So grab that stack of catalogs piling up on your coffee table and clear out the clutter. Visit CatalogChoice.org to put a stop to unwanted catalogs. Within 10 weeks, your mailbox will be empty of unwanted catalogs. A less cluttered mailbox means less pollution, less waste and less of the pollution that causes global warming.

Give Up Conventional Detergents

Cost: \$10.25 for one 112-oz box

Many natural detergents today are made to clean clothes just as effectively in cooler water temperatures. Choose detergents and other laundry products that are plant-based, concentrated and biodegradable.

Give Up the Clothes Dryer

Cost: \$0

The second biggest household energy user, after the refrigerator, is the clothes dryer. Overdrying your clothes can end up costing you money as well. (As much as \$70,000 over your lifetime, according to the Green Cheapskate.) An electric dryer operating an extra 15 minutes a load can cost you up to \$34 a year in wasted energy; a gas dryer, \$21 a year. When using the dryer, clear the lint filter after each load and dry only full loads of clothes. Dry heavy fabrics separately from lighter ones, and don't add wet clothing in the middle of the drying cycle. And remember that hanging clothing outside in the sun and air to dry is the most energy-efficient method.

Check for Leaks in Your Toilet

Cost: \$0

Most of us would be surprised to find out that one in every five toilets leak, and since the leaks are usually silent, you probably have no idea if your toilet is leaking. A leaking toilet can waste anywhere between 30 and 500 gallons of water every day, so any leak should be repaired. To see if your toilet is leaking, put a few drops of food coloring in the toilet tank. If the dye shows up in the toilet bowl after 15 minutes or so, the toilet has a leak. Leaking is usually caused by an old or poorly fitting flapper valve, which can be replaced.

Give Up Toilet Paper (OK, Just

Conventional Toilet Paper)

Cost: \$2.96 for 4-pack, 260 sheets

Believe it or not, switching to recycled toilet paper can change the world. If every household in the United States bought just one four-pack of 260-sheet recycled bath tissue, instead of the typical tissue made from virgin fiber, it would eliminate 60,600 pounds of chlorine pollution, preserve 356 million gallons (1.35 billion liters) of fresh water and save nearly 1 million trees. And the best news is that a four-pack of recycled toilet paper costs about the same as a four-pack of conventional toilet paper.

Give Up Paper Towels

Cost: \$6.95

No matter how you look at it, paper towels create waste. During your next trip to the grocery store, buy some reusable microfiber towels, which grip

dirt and dust like a magnet, even when they get wet. When you are finished with them, toss the towels in the wash and reuse them again and again. They are even great for countertops and mirrors. When you absolutely have to use disposable towels, look for recycled products. If every household in the United States replaced just one roll of virgin fiber paper towels (70 sheets) with 100 percent recycled ones, we could save 544,000 trees.

Run a Fully Loaded Dishwasher

Cost: \$0

If you have dishwasher, use it. Running a fully loaded dishwasher -- without prerinsing the dishes -- can use a third less water than washing the dishes by hand, saving up to 10 to 20 gallons of water a day. Simply scrape large pieces of food off your dishes and let the dishwasher handle the rest. And by using the air-dry setting (instead of heat-dry), you will consume half the amount of electricity without spending a dime.

Lower the Temp in Your Fridge

Cost: \$0

As one of the biggest appliances in your kitchen, the refrigerator is also one of the most power hungry, accounting for 10 to 15 percent of the average home energy bill each month. Get your fridge running in tip-top shape. First, set the refrigerator thermostat to maintain a temperature between 38 and 42 degrees (F). This temperature will protect your food from spoiling while saving electricity. Twice a year, clean the condenser coil at the back of your fridge. Condenser coils tend to get dusty, making them less efficient.

Give Up 2 Degrees

Cost: \$0

Electric power plants are the country's largest industrial source of the pollutants that cause global warming. By snuggling under a blanket on the couch on a snowy winter night instead of turning up the heat, or enjoying the breeze from a fan in the height of summer instead of turning up the air conditioning, you can save pounds of pollution, as well as some money off your utility bills. Set your thermostat in winter to 68 degrees F (20° C) or less during the daytime and 55 degrees F (13° C) before going to sleep or when you are away for the day. And during the summer, set thermostats to 78 degrees F (26° C) or more.

Give Up Dry Cleaning

Cost: \$0

Until recently, almost all dry cleaners used a cancer-causing chemical called perchloroethylene, also known as Perc or TCE. Traces of this

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*Save the Pine Bush GIS Class continued
from page 1*

Quantum GIS is available for Mac OS X, Linux, and Windows computers at www.qgis.org. A tutorial I wrote on QGIS is available at www.andyarthur.org/qgis.

Space is limited, please email Andy Arthur at andy@andyarthur.org or call 281-9873 to reserve your spot.

Persons attending the class are encouraged to ride a bicycle or take public transit. Bike racks exist at library. The Route 18 (Delaware Avenue) bus leaving from Greyhound in Downtown or Price Chopper in Slingerlands at 1:45 PM will get you to library at 2 PM. You can take the bus home at 4:10 PM.

New Year Green Resolutions!from page 3

toxic chemical remain on your clothes after dry cleaning and will evaporate into the air in your car or home. If you have to use a traditional dry cleaner, take your dry cleaning out of the plastic and air it outside or near a window before hanging it in your closet. To avoid the need for dry cleaning at all, make customer care a part of your clothing purchase decisions and choose fabrics that don't require dry cleaning at all.

Mark Your Calendars!

The Next Save the Pine Bush Dinners will be on the following dates at our new location: Westminster Presbyterian Church, 85 Chestnut Street, Albany. Parking is adjacent to the entrance on the west.

- January 18, Wednesday**
- February 15, Wednesday**
- March 22, Thursday**
- April 18, Wednesday**
- May 16, Wednesday**
- June 20, Wednesday**

Ward Stone is Recovering

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 but needing intensive care for now. Cards and letters are welcome and can be sent to: Ward Stone at Albany Medical Center, Surgical ICU, D322, 43 New Scotland Ave., Albany, NY 12208. All of us at Save the Pine Bush wish Ward a quick recovery. The environment needs him!

Reprinted from the Daily Gazette, January 3, 2012 - by Kathleen Moore

Schenectady Pine Bush sees Preservation boost

SCHENECTADY — The Woodlawn Preserve is getting closer and closer to full protection.

After years of negotiations, the City Council finally adopted a management plan for the preserve last week. The plan will help keep the remnants of Pine Bush ecology that remain in the badly deteriorated preserve, and lays out the steps to restore the flora and fauna that are trademarks of the area.

Even if the city had the money to begin full restoration immediately, it would still take years to create a safe habitat for the Karner Blue butterfly, which can only live in Pine Bush areas.

But there are some free steps the city can take now, the most basic of which is to simply give the preserve a legal designation that would prevent any future City Council from selling the land.

On maps, the Woodlawn Preserve looks promising; it's at the edge of the city, near the Niskayuna suburb, and has a grid of streets laid out on paper to be created by the first developer to build there.

It appears to be prime land, vacant and waiting for development. Developers have come to the city repeatedly seeking to buy the land. The City Council has often been tempted to sell.

City workers want to ensure that doesn't happen again.

"The next time, there will be different people working here who don't remember the history," Zoning Officer Steve Strichman said.

"It's so we can put this to bed, once and for all. What we've seen, time and again, developers keep looking at that and making proposals."

He wants to get rid of the paper streets — a street configuration that exists only on city planning maps.

"I want it to look like Central Park on the maps," he said.

The City Council also plans to officially designate the preserve as an area that can never be developed. The law department is still working to determine exactly how that designation should be worded.

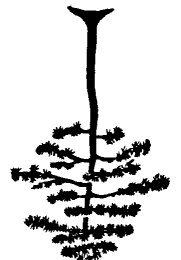
"It's to make it clear that this is the will of the people that this will be forever wild," Strichman said.

Simply saying it should be set aside "for public purposes" is not enough. The city once accidentally sold Pine Bush land on what is now Chadwick Road that had been designated that way, he said.

While city officials work, some residents near the preserve are already preparing to haul out some of the invasive trees and plants that are killing the Pine Bush flora. A group has been working on that occasionally for years.

One of their biggest supporters is City Historian Don Rittner, who wrote the management plan. He's hoping to completely restore the preserve, but he warned it will take years to accomplish.

Return Service Requested



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