



ECOS NEWS



ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse
Celebrating Our 44th Year in Environmental Education

Vol. XLV

Number 2

December 2016 / January 2017

ECOS Annual Holiday Party
Wednesday, December 14th 5pm to 7pm
Niskayuna Recreation Center
2682 Aqueduct Road, Niskayuna

Holiday Snacks & Appetizers

Raffle Baskets

Re-Gift Treasure Sale

Bring a Friend

Bring a dish to share if you'd like

RE-GIFTING- The Ultimate in Recycling

Keeping with the environmental theme of reduce, reuse and recycle, ECOS is asking you to donate a "treasure" that you may have in your home. We will then offer these treasures at a gift sale at our annual Holiday Party on Wednesday, December 14th. Please help the environment, support ECOS and come shopping for a "new to you gift" just in time for the holiday season. Items should be in very good to new condition. Please pre-price the items.

Donations may be dropped off at the ECOS office. Please call 370-4125 if you have any questions.

Ski/Snowshoe leaders needed!!!!

ECOS is looking for volunteers to help lead or co-lead ski and snowshoe outings this winter. Trips are Tuesday mornings from 9:30 to noon. Leaders can choose a location of their choice. Anyone interested in being a leader or volunteer please contact ECOS at 370-4125 or info@ecosny.org

Walk, Ski or Snowshoe at Indian Meadows
with Ruth Schottman
Tuesday, December 13th 9:30
Contact ECOS after 3:00 on
Monday, December 12th for details.

ECOS Currently Seeking New Board Members and Board Officers

Of particular interest are potential Board Members who are working in environmental advocacy, environmental oversight, or public education; or who possess grant writing skills. Members who live outside of Schenectady County are also encouraged to become involved as Board Members. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Bruce Bonacquist at brucebonacquist@yahoo.com.

If you have expertise in any of the aforementioned areas, and wish to serve on an ECOS committee rather than as a Board Member, please contact Patrick Clear at info@ecosny.org.

Environmental Song Swap

At the Rachel Carson Celebration, Nancy Peterson offered the following auction item, and there are openings for a few more people to join in. At her home in Schenectady, she will host an afternoon or evening of sharing songs about the Earth.

Nancy will prepare song sheets for participants. Everyone who comes is also welcome to bring songs to share. Refreshments will be served. There is a fee of \$10 to benefit ECOS. A mutually convenient date will be set by interested participants.

Please reply to nancyjeanpeterson@gmail.com or call 374-5810.

Single Stream Recycling Facility Tour

Anyone interested in visiting the Single Stream facility at 875 South Pearl St, Albany, NY 12202 on Wednesday, December 14th, contact Bill Shapiro at 393-0611 or sarrobill@gmail.co. We will meet at 9:00 at the ECOS office, 2682 Aqueduct Rd. Niskayuna, and leave from there in order to make it by 10:00 to County Waste. We will decide about carpooling when we get to ECOS at 9:00. This event is sponsored by the ECOS Recycling Committee. Please RSVP so we know how many to expect.

ECOS NEWS

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ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.

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10 am — 3 pm and by appointment.

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ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is a non-political, not-for-profit organization. Our mission is to provide environmental information and educational opportunities that enhance appreciation of the natural world, to build a community that is aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and to advocate informed action to preserve our natural resources. ECOS is funded through the support of our members and the community.

JOIN THE LOCAL FOOD REVOLUTION

We are building a new, full-time cooperative market featuring local, organic and sustainably produced natural foods in downtown Schenectady.



Electric City Food Cooperative
PO Box 1416, Schenectady, NY 12301

Contact: Kat Wolfram
(518) 322-6628
www.electriccityfood.coop

eBay Giving Works

Did you receive a holiday gift you don't want or need? Sell it on eBay and support ECOS. eBay Giving Works is the dedicated program for charity listings where you can buy or sell items to support non-profit organizations. This program enables you to list items on eBay and donate part or all of the final sale price to your favorite nonprofit organizations. Since 2000, more than \$81 million has been raised for charity from listings sold on eBay worldwide. To learn how the program works visit ebay.com and click on Giving Works. ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is participating in this program.

iGive.com

Shopping online this Holiday Season? If you are then you can support your favorite charity, AT NO EXTRA COST TO YOU, by visiting www.iGive.com. Over 800 of you favorite stores and catalogs participate in this program in which the retailer donates a portion of your purchase to your favorite charity. In addition, there are special discounts and sales available through iGive.com. ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse has raised over \$200 through this program so far.

RLE Photography & Media

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Richard L. Endres



Blenheim-Gilboa Power Project Visitors Center
1378 State Route 30 • North Blenheim, NY 12131
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Visitors Center Exhibits on energy and the environment.
Open daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. except some holidays.
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Contact: samantha.vanness@nypa.gov



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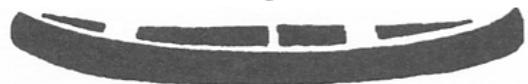
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(off Balltown Rd. at Rexford Bridge)

Shop your favorite stores with iGive.com and help support ECOS this Holiday Season \$5 New Member Bonus for the Holidays

Each and every person who joins between November 3, and November 30, and makes at least one purchase within the first 45 days of membership earns an extra \$5 donation. That's in addition to the normal donation amount. It's a great time to ask folks to help your group, simply by shopping.

Three important details -

- 1. Over 1750 stores participating.
2. New iGive members only (never joined before).
3. They must use the iGive Button, and iGive App or a link from iGive when they shop and returns will cause the Bonus to be removed.

Join for Free, Shop or Search Online, and Help a Great Cause! Be a part of the first and largest online network of shoppers, online stores, and worthy causes dedicated to turning everyday online shopping and searching into much-needed donations.

FREE Membership. Great Deals. iGive.com is totally free. Plus, you get access to free shipping deals and exclusive coupons, on top of the great deals you'll find every day through our network of 1,700+ stores. Shop at 1,700+ Top-Notch Online Stores. Best of all, up to 26% of your purchase at each store is donated to your favorite worthy cause. Many of these contributions could even be considered tax-deductible.

Raise a Penny Per Search at www.iGive.com! Why not raise money every time you search the web? Try iGive's search engine and enjoy free, easy fundraising for a good cause.

Annual Yule Log Celebration Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center

On Sunday, December 11th from 1-4 PM, the story of the Yule Log and the Winter Solstice will be shared at the Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center, followed by a search for the hidden Yule Log. We start the afternoon by sharing the traditional story of the Yule Log and the science of the Winter Solstice. Folks will be given a few hints before searching for the hidden Yule Log. Once found, it will be carried back and enjoyed at the outdoor campfire. David Muska will demonstrate how to start a fire by friction. Holiday crafts and greens will be available to make. People of all ages are encouraged to come out to this free, informal program. Hot chocolate and light snacks will be provided, and feel free to bring your own snacks to share. For more information, please contact the Center at dykenpond@gmail.com or 658-2055.

Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center is a Rensselaer County Park open daily during daylight hours for hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Call for more information and a complete schedule of our winter events.

Union College Kelly Adirondack Center 2016-2017 Lecture Series

All lectures are free and open to the public. Time and location TBA.

Mon, Jan 16th Native Traditions and Perspectives on the Land with Robin Wall Kimmerer, biologist and author of Braiding Sweetgrass. Questions? contact Caleb Northrop at (518) 388-6305 or northroc@union.edu. www.union.edu/adirondacks/

ECOS Membership

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. P.O. Box 9118, Niskayuna, NY 12309 (518) 370-4125

Please check your membership contribution level.

- \$30. Individual \$55. Donor/Organization \$250. Benefactor
\$40. Family \$125. Sustainer \$500. Patron
\$ Additional Donation

Please make your check payable to: ECOS

Name _____ Phone _____
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As a GE employee (or retiree) my contribution is eligible for GE Foundation Matching Funds. I have registered with GE for the matching gift by computer at www.gefoundation.com. (If you do not have computer access, call customer service at 1-800-305-0669.)

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I would like to be a volunteer. Please send me more information.

Executive Director's Report

Déjà vu? It snowed in October. It's raining today, November 15, and flowers are still blooming. The weather is eerily similar to this time last year and a winter in which all our ski and snowshoe outings were cancelled due to lack of snow. We did enjoy several nice winter walks but at least one ski trip would have been great. In hopes of better conditions this winter we are still in need of trip leaders for our Tuesday ski and snowshoe outings in January and February.

And don't forget to join us Thursday, December 15 for our annual holiday party and re-gifting sale. Stop by for great food and friends.

And for those who shop online please consider supporting ECOS with your purchases by shopping with Amazon Smile and iGive.com

Happy Holidays!
Patrick Clear

Shop AmazonSmile & Support ECOS this Holiday Season

What is AmazonSmile? AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

How do I shop at AmazonSmile? To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

Which products on AmazonSmile are eligible for charitable donations? Tens of millions of products on AmazonSmile are eligible for donations. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. Recurring Subscribe-and-Save purchases and subscription renewals are not currently eligible.

Can I use my existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile? Yes, you use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

How do I select a charitable organization to support? On your first visit to AmazonSmile, you select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases **before** you begin shopping. We will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at will result in a donation.

How much of my purchase does Amazon donate? The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and does not include shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges.

President's Letter

Are you concerned with food issues that go beyond "what will we eat for dinner tonight?" Where is your food grown? What are the working conditions for the people who harvest and process the food that you eat? Are you consuming harmful chemicals along with your nutrition?

I am going a bit off topic this month, as ECOS is not directly involved in the information I am mentioning. Most of us have heard of genetically modified seeds, and we know there are pesticides and herbicides used by some farmers in some places, but we probably don't know whether the food we eat is or has been affected by these processes.

I would direct your attention to a recent New York Times article, also reprinted in other local papers, "Doubts about a Promised Bounty", and printed October 30th, 2016. There are too many things to relate from that article in this small space, as corporate interests promote their products (seeds, pesticides, and herbicides), and farmers in Canada and the United States have used them to a much greater extent in the last twenty years than European countries.

This article points out that two promised benefits have not been realized yet in North America. Their use ... "has not accelerated increases in crop yields or led to an overall reduction in the use of chemical pesticides." Whether these two promised (and unseen) benefits would cause a reexamination of the corporate products remains to be seen. It is a complicated situation with farmers, consumers, scientists, and corporate stockholders all looking at the facts differently. The European experience, which is basically different from ours, allows for comparative analysis of the costs in growing certain food products, and reopens the issue of whether or not seeds should be genetically modified, and whether or not pesticides and herbicides should be used to increase production.

Whether or not the American consumer is being negatively affected by trace amounts of chemicals from pesticides and herbicides is an on-going question that will be answered by our health statistics and those of our children and grandchildren in the future.

Will Seyse

**Union College The Environmental Science,
Policy and Engineering**

Winter Seminar Series: How Safe is our Water?

Speakers TBA

Wednesdays, January 18th and 25th 7 – 8:30pm

Doug Klein kleind@union.edu

www.union.edu/news/calendar



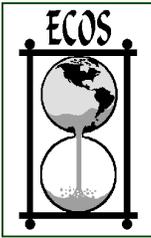
A Place For Folk 2017

Friday, January 20th

Cold Chocolate

Opening for Cold Chocolate is the Thirsty Bear

For information www.aplaceforfolk.org



ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 9118
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**ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is located in the Niskayuna Community Center,
2682 Aqueduct Road, Niskayuna, NY.**

Schenectady Cornell Cooperative Extension December Programs

Natural Skincare Products from your Garden For holiday gift giving and personal use. **Thursday, December 1 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM** Join Master Gardener Melissa Mackinnon to learn how to make simple, high-quality skincare products from plants you can grow in your garden. Participants will learn about herbal oils and hydrosols, and will make a calendula cream for face and body as well as the world's oldest commercial facial toner, *Queen of Hungary's Water*. Great for ages 15 and up. Cost: \$15 per person and includes two jars of cream and toner to take home. Pre-registration and payment is required by Monday, November 28.

Children's Class: Birdseed Feeders **Saturday, December 10 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM** Invite and entice winter birds to your yard with these lovely feeders. Under the direction of Extension Educator Angela Tompkins, each child will make three feeders in a decorative shape, that can be given as gifts or kept so they can watch birds enjoy the fruit (seed!) of their labor. The class is designed for children ages 4 and up, and an adult must be present to assist the child. Pre-registration and payment is required by Monday, December 5. Cost: \$10 per person, with no charge for person assisting.

Contact Grace Salerno, ges17@cornell.edu (518) 372-1622 ext. 240

Location: Sustainable Living Center, 180 PTL Arthur Chaires Lane, Schenectady, New York 12308



ECOS Board and Committee Members at non-profit training workshop.