

CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservation News & Local Events

By Skip Doyle, Conservation Chair

Conservation Vice-Chairs

With the growing number of activities sponsored by the Conservation Committee, and the broad range of issues that the Conservation Committee addresses, I am enthused to announce two new conservation vice-chair appointments:

Nicole Gherardi has volunteered as **Vice-Chair of Media Relations** to communicate conservation information, issues and articles to the AMC-NY.org webmaster, action groups and to external publications. Nicole, member since 2006, is dedicated to bringing awareness of our depleting ecosystem to the forefront of local news fostering action. Her primary interest lies in everyday practices for conservation, such as Leave No Trace. One individual can make a difference. Nicole loves challenges. She spends her free time tackling triathlons and marathons, as well as hiking, skiing, yoga, and MTB. Nicole is pursuing a Doctor of Physical Therapy, a far cry from her previous career in publishing. Nicole's most inspiring moments are spent volunteering at the Cerebral Palsy Foundation. The students' spirits move her to new heights. Nicole looks forward to the adventures she will have with her AMC friends.

Mary Lindberg has volunteered as **Vice-Chair of Conservation Liaisons** to maintain contacts with other conservation groups and NY-NoJ Chapter committee chairs, and communicate their conservation initiatives affecting our chapter and the AMC. As a new member of AMC, Mary wants to raise awareness of issues we often take for granted, like pollution of air and water; the fact that 14 of our national parks are polluted is of concern. She looks forward to the challenge of coordinating concerns of local groups, resulting in stronger and more effective success in regional conservation issues. Her favorite destination is the Grand Canyon, but looks forward to the AMC introducing her to the glories of the Hudson Valley. In the past, Mary has worked with the Sierra Club, specifically on Alaska conservation issues. She is an adjunct professor of English at the College of Mount

Saint Vincent. Also a writer, last fall a book of her poems, *The Tang of Glue*, was published.

We are still in need of a volunteer as **Vice-Chair of Conservation and Environmental Advocacy** to monitor, distill, and advise the Conservation Committee on significant conservation issues in our chapter region and beyond.

Conservation Committee Nature Retreats

The weekend of October 6-7, the AMC will host a nature retreat (Esopus, NY) in conjunction with the Maple Ridge Community, American Museum of Natural History, Clearwater, Scenic Hudson, and John Burrough's Society. The schedule includes a Saturday presentation and hiking at Slabsides, biking the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail on Sunday, and a tour of the Esopus Lighthouse on Columbus Day.

The weekend of September 29-30, the AMC in conjunction with the Audubon Society will participate in a nature retreat at Graymoor (Garrison, NY) offering AT hiking on Saturday, and an Audubon led canoe tour and presentation in Constitution Marsh (Cold Spring) on Sunday.

Check the Fall Schedule for details or contact Skip Doyle at conservation@amc-ny.org.

Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act

Last month, New York State passed the Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act which allows individual municipalities in the counties of Westchester, Putnam, Orange and Ulster to hold voter referendums to establish local funding for open space preservation. Funding is from a 2% or less assessment on real estate purchases only on homes exceeding the median home price in that area. That fund is then available for environmental assets such as parks, recreational areas, nature preserves, open space, agricultural lands, exceptional scenic views, aquifer recharge areas, beach front and shorelines, wetlands, wildlife refuges, waterways and river areas, forestland, and historic places and properties. Such a plan has already been in place in Suffolk County. The non-profit conservation organization, Westchester Land Trust, has been active in promoting this legislation as well as assisting landowners in Westchester to protect open space through easements.

As a next step, you can help by drafting and supporting referendums in your municipality to create funds that protect such environmental assets in your community.