

Nebraska Sierran

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Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet

March Program

Coping with 'Chucks, 'Coons, other Critters

By Mary Green

Mo Valley Program Director

Have you ever wondered how to keep raccoons out of your chimney, or woodchucks out of your garden? Our ever-expanding urban areas, and ever-growing human population, are resulting in increasing numbers of human encounters with wildlife.

Nebraska Wildlife Rehab (<http://www.nebraskawildliferehab.org>) is a 25-year-old non-profit Omaha organization of volunteers that cares for injured, sick, and orphaned wildlife, and reintroduces them to the wild.

Sierra Club March 25 program speaker Laura Stastny will give tips on how we can more peacefully and humanely co-exist with native wildlife. We will learn about the natural behavior of local wildlife, and how to use this knowledge to avoid conflicts. One of the reasons deer and rabbit populations are so large,

notes Stastny, is that we have exterminated the predator animals, making our ecological system out of balance.

Sierra Club Program Living in Harmony with Native Wildlife

Laura Stastny of

Nebraska Wildlife Rehab

Thursday, Mar. 25, 7 p.m.

First United Methodist Church

69th & Cass streets, Omaha

Enter north door

The public is welcome at all Sierra Club educational programs.

The presentation will include some live bats, and possibly some bunnies or

baby squirrels, depending on what animals happen to come in to Wildlife Rehab this month. There will be plenty of pictures of wildlife and descriptions of their rehabilitation process, such as the coyote captured last fall in Papillion and later released in Cass County, and the foxes Pinball and Nova. Pinball was released on private property after rehabilitation, but Nova, who was blind and discovered in April in a Bellevue yard, was eventually placed at a sanctuary in Colorado.

Please join us for an interesting evening as we learn from Nebraska Wildlife Rehab about how to treat the wildlife in our midst with compassion and tolerance as we strive to co-exist.

Sierra Club educational programs are free and open to the public. For more information contact Mary Green at mary.green@nebraska.sierraclub.org, or call 556-1830.

Chapter Receives Match for Fundraising Drive

March Appeal Supports Club Activity

By Tim Rinne

Legislative Chair

This year, the Nebraska Chapter's annual fundraising appeal is coming with an added bonus. A local supporter has pledged to personally match up to \$10,000 in donations during the annual March Appeal. Under national Club rules, March is the only month when local chapters and groups can directly solicit funds from Sierra Club members in the state. This is our opportunity to

literally double our income from this annual fundraiser, as every \$1 donated will earn us \$2. Chapter members are encouraged to squirrel away a few dollars in their piggy banks for when the March Appeal hits the mailbox next month.

With the downturn in the economy and cutbacks in support from the national organization, contributions from local members are becoming more and more important. The fundraising committee reports

that it is having to work harder and more creatively than ever to raise the money needed to support chapter activities. A December fundraising event in Omaha hosted by a number of state politicians and business figures marked a major first step in the Nebraska Sierra Club's outreach efforts. But more needs to be done if the chapter is to maintain its role as the leading environmental voice in the state senate.

For 2010, an election year, the Chapter's PAC coffers need to be replenished, so the club

can make candidate endorsements in both legislative and congressional races.

More and more, the Nebraska Sierra Club has to pull itself up by its own financial bootstraps and pay its own way. But it can be done with your generous gift.

Be on the look-out for your March Fundraising Appeal mailing. Not only does every dollar of donation count this year (because of the fundraising match provided by our private champion) every dollar counts two!

Chapter Chair's Corner

Meet Sierra Club's New Executive Director

By Dick Boyd
Nebraska Chapter Chair

After 18 years as the Sierra Club's Executive Director, last year Carl Pope announced his resignation. This January, Mike Brune was selected by the National Board of Directors as the organization's new executive director.

For those who have not read the biography of Michael Brune on the Sierra Club web site, much of the information below came from there as well as from an article by Jason Mark in the publication Earth Island Journal.

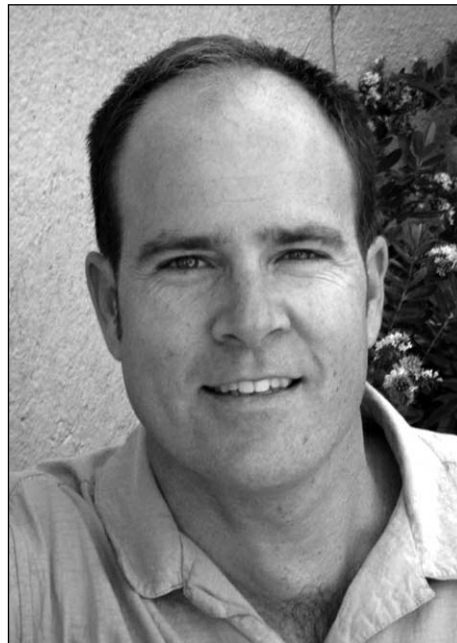
Here is some general background information. Brune has dual degrees from West Chester University in Pennsylvania in economics and finance (1993). He became a grassroots organizer for Greenpeace for four years before he moved on to the Rainforest Action Network (RAN). In 2003, he became that organization's executive director. RAN, a San Francisco based group, runs corporate accountability campaigns against clear-cut logging, mountaintop coal mining, industrial palm plantations, and tar sands extraction in western Canada as well as other types of environmental destruction.

According to Jason Mark, the final came down to Mike Brune and Bruce Nilles, who is the head of the Club's coal campaign. Mark's comment is that Brune's selection could result in a shift towards a more muscular, in-your-face posture to press the Club's agenda.

This may be based upon the fact that Brune has been arrested in protests at least five times. The last arrest was in June along with Darryl Hannah and James Hansen at a mountaintop removal in West Virginia.

It is interesting to note Brune has targeted corporations with great creativity. The best example is a campaign against clear-cutting in the rainforest in British Columbia.

The biggest customer of the



Mike Brune, Sierra Club Executive Director

logging company involved was Home Depot. Brune lead RAN'S campaign by enlisting the logging industry's top customers to lobby for protection of the rain forest. This resulted in Home Depot chang-

ing its policy, which helped protect more than 5 million acres of rainforest in B.C. That campaign resulted in Time magazine calling the victory the most important environmental story in 1999. This also led many of Home Depot's competitors to follow the lead to protect rainforest as far as Chile and Indonesia.


In addition, under Brune's leadership, RAN won more than a dozen other key commitments from other large corporations including Citi, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Kinko's, Boise, and Lowe's. RAN's mantra has been to be hard on the issues, but soft on the people involved. I believe that is the best mantra.

The Sierra Club will still address its most serious challenge: that of climate change. Along with National's support for wind, solar and other renewable energy sources, Mike Brune's book, "Coming Clean-Breaking America's Addiction to Oil and Coal," covers these subjects and others.

Brune's wife Mary is the cofounder of the group called "Mom's Making Our Milk Safe." They and their two children, Olivia, 5, and Sebastian, 1, live in Alameda, Calif.

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Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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It's Still Winter; Let's Go Skiing!

By Bob "Entity" Goetschkes
MVG Outings Chair

Come for a cross-country ski outing at Schilling Wildlife Management Area where the Platte River and the Missouri River meet outside of Plattsmouth.

The Missouri Valley Group of the Sierra Club Outing is scheduled for Saturday, March 13.

Schilling WMA is flat, exposed former farmland that borders the Missouri River to its north and east.

There is a historical marker at the confluence of the Platte and Missouri rivers.

For more info about Schilling, go to www.ngpc.state.ne.us/wildlife/places/sc_hilling.asp.

Consider this a tentative trip, as snow conditions get harder to predict the closer we get to spring.

Directions from Omaha: Highway 75 south toward Plattsmouth, getting off on state spur 13C to drive into the town, travel east on Main Street across the railroad tracks to Schilling Road. Turn left. Follow signs north until reaching a parking area, about 1 mile.

Equipment can be rented at the Outdoor Venture Center, HPER Building, on the UNO Campus: www.unomaha.edu/~wwwocr and can be contacted via unoovc@mail.unomaha.edu.

This outing is open to all skill levels. Dress for current weather conditions by wearing layered clothing, gloves, and a hat. Bring a sack lunch and two liters of water to eat/drink on the trail.

Carpoolers can meet at Wohlner's Grocery store across from Stinson Park in Aksarben Village just east of 72nd and Center streets, south of the UNO campus, by 8 a.m. (There can be a charge if you choose to carpool with others).

Plan to be back in Omaha by 5 p.m.

Please RSVP to bobbygoetschkes@hotmail.com or (402) 614-4788 (home) (402) 326-1775 (cell) with your name, phone number, and email address.

It is requested that a \$1 donation be made to the Outings Program in order to support ongoing training of Outings Leaders.

See you on the trail!

Radical Amazement: David James Duncan Lectures

The Sierra Club is co-sponsoring, with The Nature Conservancy and Countryside Community Church's Center for Faith Studies, the second annual Radical Amazement event, exploring the intersections of faith, imagination, and the environment, through lectures and opportunities for conversation offered by visiting author David James Duncan.

"The Wild Without, The Wild Within" Friday April 9, 7 p.m.

"In the Beginning" and "Fly Fishing and Life" Saturday April 10, 9 a.m.

Countryside Community Church, 8787 Pacific St., Omaha

Duncan is the author of several books including *The River Why*, *My Story as Told by Water* and *The Brothers K*. Duncan's first novel, *The River Why*, an unusual story of fly-fishing and spiritual questing in western Oregon, was initially published by the Sierra Club, and became a Book-of-the-Month-Club selection.

Duncan's Friday evening talk, April 9 at 7 p.m., is titled "The Wild Without, The Wild Within," and will be followed by a Q&A and book signing.

Duncan's Saturday breakfast talks, April 10, 9-11:30 a.m., are titled "In the Beginning" and "Fly Fishing and Life: Tales of a Life in the Company of Living Waters."

Advance tickets are required for all events. Tickets for the Friday lecture have a suggested \$10 donation. Saturday's tickets, which include both talks and a continental breakfast, are also available for a \$10 suggested donation. Tickets are available at Countryside Church in the main office. Students with ID get in free to the Friday evening event.

For more information call the Center for Faith Studies at 391-0350, x121, or go to <http://countrysideucc.org/cfs/home>

Don't Forget to Vote in National Sierra Club Election

By Steve Krieg
Chief Inspector of Election

The annual election for the Sierra Club's Board of Directors is now under way. Those eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election will receive a national Sierra Club ballot in the mail (or by internet for those with the electronic delivery option). This will include information on the candidates and where you can find additional information on the Club's website.

The Sierra Club is a democratically structured organization at all levels. The Club requires the regular flow of views on policy and priorities from its grassroots membership in order to function well. Yearly participation in elections at all Club levels is a major membership obligation. The directors are required to stand for election by the membership.

The Board sets Club policy and budgets at the national level and works closely with the executive director and staff to operate the

Club. Voting for candidates who express your views on how the Club should grow and change is both a privilege and responsibility of membership.

Members frequently say they don't know the candidates and find it difficult to vote without learning more. You can learn more by asking questions of your group and chapter leadership and other experienced members you know. Visit the Club's election website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/bod/2010election/default.aspx>. This site provides links to additional information about candidates, and their views on a variety of issues facing the Club and the environment.

You should read the ballot statement of each candidate. Then make your choice and cast your vote. Even if you receive your election materials in the mail, please go to the user-friendly internet voting site to save time and postage. Alternatively, you will find the paper ballot is quite straightforward and easy to mark and mail.

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March 2010

Events

Tuesday, March 9, Nebraska Local Foods Conference, University of Nebraska East Campus Union, Learn more about production and consumption of local foods in Nebraska. Topics related to food safety, local foods markets and barriers that inhibit distribution of local foods. Sessions will include a combination of updates, speakers and interactive panels.

Saturday, March 13, cross-country ski outing at Schilling Wildlife Management Area outside of Plattsmouth. See article on page 3.

Saturday, March 20, 9 a.m. - noon, Thursday, March 25, 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 27, 9 a.m. - noon, Green Garden Workshops, at Metropolitan Community College Fort Omaha Campus - Building 7 (30th and Fort streets). The city of Omaha, funded by the Nebraska

Department of Environmental Quality, is sponsoring three Green Garden Workshops about rain gardens, the benefits of sustainable garden design and specific plants to enhance landscaping. The workshops feature horticulturist Steve Rodie, Ted Hartsig, a soil scientist with Olsson Associates and sustainable landscape designer Andy Szatko. To register or for more information, email greengardens@lovgren.com, or call Nancy at 397-7158.

Thursday March 25, 7 p.m. "Living with Harmony with Native Wildlife" with Laura Stastny of Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, at First United Methodist Church, 69th & Cass streets.

Saturday, March 27, 10 a.m., Chapter Excom meeting, Unitarian Church, 6300 A St., Lincoln. The ExCom will discuss policies, issues, procedures, and activities for the chapter.

The chapter lobbyist and the various issue chairs will give reports. All chapter members are welcome to attend the meeting and to participate in the discussions.

April 9 & 10, Radical Amazement: David James Duncan Lectures, "The Wild Without, The Wild Within" Friday April 9, 7 p.m., "In the Beginning" and "Fly Fishing and Life" Saturday April 10, 9 a.m. at Countryside Community Church, 8787 Pacific St., Omaha

Tuesday, April 13, 2010, Nebraska Action for Healthy Kids Summit 2010, in Lincoln. NAHK is a statewide coalition of state and local leaders in public health, education, and community outreach organizations. This event aims to promote school wellness. Schools will also be recognized for outstanding wellness efforts, and can apply online for the Action

Award in January 2010. For more information visit: www.neactionforhealthykids.org.

Saturday, April 17, noon to 8 p.m., Earth Day Omaha 2010, Elmwood Park

April 24th & 25th, Omaha Health, Wellness, & Fitness Expo: The Mind, Body, & Spirit Fair, - Saturday 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Omaha Civic Auditorium, Mancuso Convention Center & Exhibition Hall - 17th Street and Capitol Avenue

To list an event or activity in the newsletter and online, e-mail the particulars to MoValSierraNews@yahoo.com or mail it to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 4664 Omaha, NE 68104 For more information, call Scott at 981-7819