

# *Crossroads Group* *Sierra Club*



FALL 2023

## **Elections 2024-2025 - Crossroads Group Executive Committee Members**

Once again, the time has come to elect our Crossroads Sierra Club leaders to carry us through the next 2 years. Please read the candidate statements on page 2 and use the ballot below to vote for up to 4 candidates. The second column is for use by those with joint memberships. Ballots must be returned by December 1, 2023.

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### **Sierra Club Crossroads Group Executive Committee 2023 Official Ballot**

	<b>Member</b>	<b>Family Membership</b>
<b>Heather Hodge</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Curtis Hamilton</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Scott Greer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Jim Williams</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please:**

- 1. Vote for up to four people (their statements are page 2).**
  - 2. Cut off this ballot.**
  - 3. Place the ballot in an envelope.**
  - 4. Write your membership number (from address label) on the outside of the envelope.**
  - 5. Mail the ballot to:**  
**Sierra Club Crossroads Group**  
**P.O. Box 306**  
**Brighton MI 48116**
-

## Executive Committee Chairs

**Chairperson:** Lee Anzicek  
Lee.Anzicek@michigan.sierraclub.org

**Vice Chairperson:** Lee Burton  
Lee.Burton@michigan.sierraclub.org

**Treasurer:** Julie Griess  
cg.treasurer@michigan.sierraclub.org

**Secretary:** Cathy Broses  
cg.secretary@michigan.sierraclub.org

### Chapter Group Representative:

Lee Anzicek, Terri Wilkerson  
cg.grouprep@michigan.sierraclub.org

**Fundraising:** Paul Thielking, Paula Gruszka  
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**Media:** Paula Gruszka  
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**Membership:** Cathy Sayre, Suzen Oliver  
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**Newsletter:** cg.pubs@michigan.sierraclub.org

**Outings:**  
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**Political:** Ginny Maturen, Curt Hamilton  
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**Programs:** Mary Novrocki, Karen Schmitz  
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**Webmaster:** Laurie Mercure  
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**Conservation:** Ron Kardos, Shirley Jackson  
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### VISIT US AT:

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## Sierra Club Crossroads Group Executive Committee Candidate Statements

(see ballot on page 1)

### Heather Hodge

I became a recent member of the Sierra Club in April 2023. I am co-founder and Vice-President of a non-profit organization called “The Giving Barn Community Outreach.” Last February, we lost a member of our Barn family. In honoring Linsey’s legacy of exemplary community service, I made a promise to extend myself further into service and joined the Sierra Club. I quickly realized that I had found a group with an equal passion for protecting the environment and their energy, dedication and love brings me hope for our future. I am particularly excited about a renewable energy transition and Sierra Club’s role in it, and I would love the opportunity to be a member of the Executive Committee.

### Curtis Hamilton

I have been a long-time donor to the Sierra Club and got more involved directly last year when I retired from the auto industry. I am currently the co-chair of the Crossroads Political Committee and enjoy keeping myself up-to-date and informing others of the legislation that is in the works in Lansing to help our environment and our personal health. Of special interest to me is renewable energy (solar/wind) and I think Michigan should be a national leader in clean energy. Thank you for your support!

### Scott Greer

I first became involved with the Sierra Club in 2021. I always look forward to attending the Crossroads leadership meetings; the atmosphere is great and it is wonderful to be with like-minded people. Currently I am pursuing a Master’s Degree in Chemistry in an effort to move to a career that allows me to contribute to solving the climate and environmental issues in our society.

### Jim Williams

I live in Highland, currently spending my time painting landscapes and participating in many charitable projects. I am retired from the State of Michigan as a Youth Services Caseworker. I strive to live by the golden rule, the call of service, and a belief in transformation. I believe a sustainable environment should be our focus for our future generations and we should work to protect our precious irreplaceable environment. If selected to be a part of the Executive Committee, I hope this will help me stay informed about proposals and issues broadly and locally and give me a chance to participate in Crossroads Sierra Club.

## Plastic Pollution Requires a Solution! What you can do.

Every day, the equivalent of 2,000 garbage trucks full of plastic are dumped into the world's oceans, rivers, and lakes. Each year, over 27 million tons of plastic ends up in landfills. The plastic pollution problem is becoming relentlessly worse every year, as the plastic/oil companies continue to increase their production rates.

Left alone, plastics don't really break down; they just break up. Over time, sun and heat slowly turn plastics into smaller and smaller pieces until they eventually become what are known as microplastics. These microscopic plastic fragments, no more than 5 millimeters long, are hard to detect — and are just about everywhere.

**In fact, each of us ingests through drinking water, breathing air, and eating food, the equivalent of a credit card's plastic each week.** This is a frightening fact, considering we're still learning the impact of all this plastic on our bodies and the bodies of our children.

Our reliance on single-use plastics is a big part of the problem. Half of the plastic waste produced each year is for single-use items which generally can't be recycled. Recent studies have shown that **only 6% of the world's plastic is recycled.**

There are many obstacles in plastic recycling — it is nearly impossible to sort the different types of plastics, environmentally harmful to reprocess, and not economical. Single-use plastics in particular — especially small items like straws, bags, and cutlery — are traditionally hard to recycle because they fall into the crevices of recycling machinery and therefore are often not accepted by recycling centers. Because of these obstacles, many of the plastic items in our recycling bins end up being dumped in landfills along with our garbage.

While the thought of all this pollution can be overwhelming, what follows are some simple things you can do to have an impact on plastics, on the planet, and in your life.

### How to help reduce your personal use of plastics

- **Carry a reusable water bottle wherever you go.** For those concerned about water quality, the fact is that tap water has stricter testing standards than bottled water. If you are still concerned about your tap water you can buy a filter for your sink or a water pitcher with a filter.
- **Carry your own reusable grocery bags** in your vehicle, including **reusable mesh produce bags**. Get into the habit of bringing your bags into all stores you go to, such as department stores and drug stores. If you happen to forget your bags, most stores will allow you to place your groceries or other goods into the cart without a bag.
- **Carry your own carry-out containers** in your vehicle, and bring them into restaurants with you for leftovers. If you are ordering food “to go”, one option is to tell the restaurant your order is for “dining in”. Then when they bring plates to you, you can transfer the food to your own containers.
- **Avoid plastic used in packaging and shipping by buying used items locally.** There are many websites where you can find almost anything you could ever want for sale, often much less expensive than new items and sometimes for free! Some examples are Facebook Marketplace, Nextdoor, Craigslist, and Freecycle.
- **Look at the fabric tag when you buy clothing.** Avoid any synthetic materials, which includes polyester, nylon, polyamide, and acrylic. All of these materials release plastic microfibers in the water and the air when they are manufactured, washed with your laundry, worn, or dried.
- Buy a metal, glass, or bamboo **reusable straw**. Pack it along with reusable cutlery for sustainable eating on the go.
- **Make your own cleaning products** from ingredients such as vinegar and baking soda.
- **Cook more often** to reduce your use of plastic-heavy takeout containers. Make your own snack bars instead of buying individually packaged snacks.
- Avoid plastic wrap by storing leftovers in **reusable bags or containers**.
- Use **re-usable fabric or paper party decorations** instead of balloons.
- Replace **wrapping paper** with re-usable containers, fabric, or old newspapers or old maps.
- **Contact companies** that make your favorite products to let them know that you care about the packaging. Ask them to switch to plastic-free packaging. Ask restaurant owners to switch to non-plastic straws, stirrers, tableware, and carry-out containers and bags.
- **Shop at businesses that sell zero-waste, bulk items without plastic packaging.** You can find many plastic-free products such as chewable toothpaste tablets, bamboo toothbrushes, refillable floss, bar shampoos, laundry sheets (to use instead of detergent), deodorant in non-plastic containers, non-plastic compostable tableware and cups, beeswax wrapping paper, bulk foods, and many other sustainable items. Here are some stores and websites where you can find items like these:
  - **Quartz and Company** (101 West Clinton Street, Howell).
  - **Wallflower Mercantile** (316 W Main St, Brighton)
  - **Better Health Market** (locations in Novi, Ann Arbor, and others)
  - **Zero Waste Cartel** ([www.zerowastecartel.com](http://www.zerowastecartel.com))
  - **Superbee** ([www.superbee.me](http://www.superbee.me))

## Styrofoam Recycling

What to do with this pesky material that no one seems to recycle? Fortunately, there are a couple of options available to Livingston and northern Washtenaw residents.

Recycle Livingston ([www.recyclelivingston.org](http://www.recyclelivingston.org)) at 170 Catrell St. in Howell, accepts protective packaging foam, rinsed meat trays, cups, and carry-out containers. They do not accept packaging peanuts or Styrofoam insulation. They store the collected material which is then picked up by Dart Container and taken to their recycling facility. Recycle Livingston is a member-run and funded non-profit. Check their website for annual household and business membership fees. If you're not a member, there is a \$10 non-member household gate fee per visit when recycling Styrofoam and other materials.

For those who live close to Dexter, MI, the Stamboullis family collects and recycles Styrofoam at the Dexter Mill located at 3515 Central St, Dexter on Sundays from noon until 2:00 pm. They accept protective packaging foam (with #6 inside chasing arrows symbol), rinsed meat trays, egg cartons, foam ice chests, cups, and carry-out containers. They do not accept packaging peanuts or Styrofoam insulation. They store and then deliver the Styrofoam to Dart Container recycling facility in Mason, MI. Dart Container Corporation is the world's largest manufacturer of foam cups and containers, producing about as many as all competitors combined. To facilitate the recycling process, Dart operates a wash and dry facility that cleans dirty foam so it can be recycled. Once processed, the material goes to a manufacturer that will use it to make premium picture frames, crown molding, and many other useful products.

Packing peanuts can be recycled at *most* UPS and FedEx stores. Call before you go.

Recycle Ann Arbor ([www.recycleannarbor.org](http://www.recycleannarbor.org)): The drop-off location at 2950 East Ellsworth Rd, Ann Arbor accepts packaging peanuts in addition to the above items. There is a \$3 per visit entrance fee required. ----- Phil Jackson

## Book Review: Finding the Mother Tree by Suzanne Simard

“How is it possible for trees to send warning signals, recognition messages and safety dispatches as rapidly as telephone calls? How do they help one another through distress and sickness? Why do they have human-like behaviors and why do they work like civil societies?” So begins Suzanne Simard’s book, “Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest”, as she sets out to answer these questions about these living, breathing beings.

Despite the somewhat philosophical title of her book, Simard is a true scientist who is a professor of forest ecology at the University of British Columbia. She is a native of British Columbia, having been born and raised there in the rainforests, and her family has been in the logging and forestry trades for generations. As she attended Oregon State University and University of British Columbia, she began her research into what makes trees truly tick.

Although others had studied fungi and their relationships with plants and trees, Simard took it a step further. She began studying mycorrhizal networks, created by the hyphae of mycorrhizal fungi that joined all plant and tree roots together in an incredible symbiotic relationship. These networks are how trees communicate with each other and help each other to survive and thrive.

(Interesting side note: James Cameron consulted with Simard while he was in the stages of making the movie “Avatar” because her research into “everything is connected” was the primary idea he was going for while creating the eco-paradise of Pandora).

Clearly, there is a lot of science in this book, and some of the technical details get fairly complex to follow. But what Simard succeeds in doing is creating a love letter to the trees and forests of our world. She shows us how they are as connected to family as we are, and she explains the complicated and wondrous biodiversity that a forest contains. In the end, she concludes “it will not be us saving trees; it will be the trees saving us”. If you read this book, I promise you will never look at a tree the same way again! --- Maria Burden



## Crossroads supports Michigan Chapter

At a recent meeting, Crossroads Leaders voted to present a \$1,500 check to the Michigan Chapter of the Sierra Club. The money will be used to pay for a Gongwer News subscription, which will help Chapter legislative staff stay on top of what's going on in the legislature. This photo shows Lee Anzicek presenting the check to Chapter Director Elayne Elliott, surrounded by many Crossroads Leaders.

## Crossroads Group Events

See our Meetup site [www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group) for more details about these outings and programs (including possible cancellations or changes) and to see details when we schedule future events. Meetup is free to join, and a great way to let us know who is attending each event and to allow us to communicate with our members and for you to communicate with us.

### Outings

**Brighton Recreation Area Weeknight Hike** – Wednesday October 11, 6:30 PM

Location: Bishop Lake trailhead parking lot, Brighton Recreation Area.

Join us for a weeknight headlamp hike on either the Penosha Trail (5 miles) or the Kahchin trail (2 miles).

**Maybury State Park Fall Color Hike** – Saturday October 21, 10 AM

Location: Walnut picnic shelter in the West Parking Lot near the end of the 8-Mile Rd park entrance

Join us for a fall color hike with a slower-paced 2-mile option and a faster-paced 5-mile option.

**Black Friday “OptOutside Hike”** - Friday November 24, 1 PM

Location: Island Lake Recreation Area, meet in the Kent Lake beach parking lot

Avoid the malls and #OptOutside on Black Friday with the Friends of Island Lake and Crossroads!

This is a 5-mile hike (shorter options available) on the hikers-only Hickory Ridge trail

At the time of this newsletter printing more outings are being planned. Check our Meetup website for the latest information.

### Programs

Sierra Club Crossroads Group presents these programs free to the public at

Brighton District Library: 100 Library Dr, Brighton, MI.

**Wednesdays at 7pm**

**America's Red Rock Wilderness: Fighting Climate Change-Saving Wilderness in Utah** - October 18, 7pm

Red Rock County has the largest network of unprotected wilderness remaining in the lower 48 states. Protecting it would make a vital contribution to the fight against climate change and securing Earth's biodiversity from the accelerating loss of species. The region is the ancestral homeland for Native Americans who are important advocates for its protection. Recent years have seen the loss and return of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments as well as the passage of the largest wilderness bill in two decades. But much more needs to be done. This presentation includes a slide show and guest speaker Clayton Daughenbaugh, conservation organizer with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance

**The Water Walkers by Carol Trembath** - November 15, 7pm

Carol has made water a lifelong focus and passion. Carol has been a teacher, librarian and media specialist for over 30 years. In her books, The Water Walkers Series (Water Walkers; Walking Lake Superior, Ripples and Waves; Walking Lake Huron, Stepping Stones; Walking Lake Michigan, and Pass the Feather; Walking Lake Erie) she explains what Native People have been doing to protect the Earth and its water. Carol has been a guest on MI Public Radio with Cynthia Canty and had the help of Devin Scillian from Channel 4 WDIV in getting media coverage for the Mother Earth Water Walkers when they were walking near the Detroit area in 2017.

**A Cultural Experience in The Islands of the Philippines by Dr. Karen Schmitz, Professor of Human Nutrition, Madonna University** - January 17, 7pm

As part of a Fulbright Hays Grant Program, six faculty members and five graduate students from Madonna University spent a month on four different islands of the Philippines learning about the culture, history, social programs and food production in the Philippines. This presentation will cover a variety of experiences from marching with the local police in the Independence Day Parade in Salay to practicing English skills with high school dropouts in Manila.



**Sierra Club – Crossroads Group**  
**P.O. Box 306**  
**Brighton, MI 48116**

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