

UPCOMING

--Meetings and Events

Thursday, March 12, 7-9:00PM

Community Supported Agriculture

OUR speakers will be Leslie Leahy, Treasurer/Secretary of the Fredericksburg Area Community Supported Agriculture Program, and Larry Kissell, organic poultry breeder and owner of 14 Green Acher's Farm in Caroline County.

Come find out how well the community is doing supporting our local farmers, what they have to offer, and what you can do to reduce the cost of food and improve the environment by buying more local produce thru Community-supported Agricultural initiatives.

More Programs and Outings on pg 5.....

Saturday March 28th 9 a.m. to 4 p.m
Sierra Club Information Booth at the 27th Annual Women's Forum. James Monroe High School, Fredericksburg, VA. For more information please contact Doris Whitfield: dalw@va.metrocast.net



Earth Day April 25th, 2009
10a.m. To 3 p.m.
Alum Spring Park

(see related story and details front page)



Taking the Polar Bear Plunge!

Brrrrrrr Former RG ExCom member and recent University of Mary Washington graduate Hilary Lufkin joined other Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) staff, volunteers and supporters at Belle Isle in Richmond for a frosty Polar Bear Plunge Fundraiser on January 10. As current CCAN Virginia Campus Organizer, Hilary raised over \$300 for CCAN projects designed to raise awareness of global warming.

"It was icy", said Hilary, "but also hilarious and everyone had a good time."



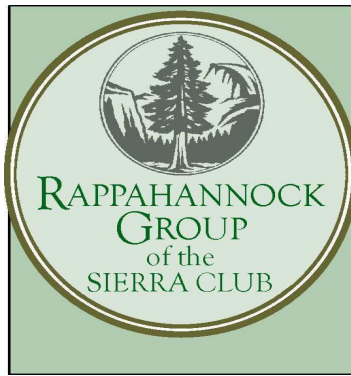
Photo Courtesy of: H. Lufkin
Hilary Lufkin (front row, second from left) and "friends" of CCAN warming up after a chilly "Polar Bear Plunge" in Richmond on January 10!

COMING UP! EARTH DAY APRIL 25TH, 2009

You're invited to a wonderful day of celebration, entertainment, and learning! Earth Day 2009 will be held **Saturday April 25th, 10am - 3pm** in **Fredericksburg's Alum Spring Park**. Hike along the cliffs, dip your toes in Hazel Run, learn about the trees and birds in the park, listen to continuous live music from the area's best groups, enjoy a picnic under the trees, and visit the dozens of exhibits about conservation and nature. New this year will be a second stage for wildlife and nature shows.

RGSC, Friends of Alum Spring Park, and Fred. Parks & Recreation Department have put together a great event for you. Parking is free at the National Guard Armory, with free FRED bus shuttle running all day long. It's a great way to show your children how important, and fun, nature is in our lives. And won't it be nice to spend a whole day having fun with people who care?

For more information, or to volunteer to help make it happen, email **Scott Howson**, Earth Day coordinator, at wshowson@msn.com. See you there!

**RG ON THE WEB:**

www.virginiasierraclub.org/rg/

VIRGINIA CHAPTER:

www.virginiasierraclub.org

SC NATIONAL:

www.sierraclub.org

RG LEADERSHIP CONTACT LIST

(*) Denotes Voting ExCom Members

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

by Doris Whitfield

CLEAN-GREEN-ENERGY

ENERGY EFFICIENCY, RENEWABLE ENERGY and GREEN TECHNOLOGY!! An amazingly coordinated environmental movement calling for ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE NOW, is taking place all across the country.

I hope that you are as excited, "energized" and actively participating in what is turning out to be a "call-to-arms" for CLEAN-GREEN-ENERGY. As the "oldest, largest, most influential grassroots environmental organization", 1.3 million members working together, we can and do make a difference.

The Sierra Club took the lead 3 1/2 years ago committing to a "Clean Energy Future". Project America and the Climate Recovery Partnership campaigns are being formed as the S.C. once again takes a strong leadership role in one of the biggest challenges facing the world, GLOBAL WARMING.

Thomas Friedman's phenomenal book, Hot, Flat and Crowded paints a very clear picture of the energy, climate and biodiversity challenges facing the world today, as well as what we must do to meet those challenges.

We can start today. Consider becoming "a one-minute-grassroot-activist". It's easy, quick and productive. By signing on to receive Sierra Club, Virginia Conservation Network and Va. League of Conservation Voter emails & alerts, one or all, you will be able to keep up with the latest news and have your voice heard & counted. <http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org>
Sierra Club: www.virginiasierraclub.org
Virginia Conservation Network: www.vcnva.org
Virginia League of Conservation Voters: www.valcv.org

On the "home-front" our Group's 2009 Energy Conservation and Recycling priorities are moving forward as more members get involved adding additional creative ideas. It's very contagious, enlightening and enjoyable when you work with other like-minded conservationists.

When requested, George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) established the Green Government Commission that includes local officials, agencies, profit & non profit organizations & citizens. Four GGC subcommittees, Green Building, Green Energy, Recycling and Natural Resources have been formed, meet monthly and are already showing tangible results. As a member of the Green Government Commission (GGC) or one of the four subcommittees, you are "partnering" with some of the leading experts in their respective fields.

Thanks to all who joined and participated in our February 12th meeting featuring Transportation Alternatives. Our panel provided a clear overview of current and projected regional transportation choices that conserved energy, reduced pollution without always having to get in our cars.

Please join us for a meeting, enjoy an outing, consider becoming a committee member and a S.C "grassroots" activist. We welcome your ideas & suggestions.



Richmond Rally for Clean Water-2009

by Linda Muller

On January 26, 2009, hundreds of clean water advocates representing dozens of organizations, including Sierra Club, gathered in Richmond Virginia for Rally for Clean Water 2009. Organized by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, (CBF) early morning participants enjoyed a welcome breakfast followed by legislative briefings by CBF President Will Baker and State Senator Mary Margaret. Nitrogen pollution is the most serious problem facing the Chesapeake Bay and it tidal rivers. CBF emphasized that Virginia must remain strong on current policies to provide clean water and to continue pollution reduction efforts.

Specifically, CBF outlined how the General Assembly is encouraged to support clean water goals:

- Maintain current funding and promote future funding for the Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP's) through Virginia's Natural Resources Commitment Fund.
- Maintain Virginia's plan to reduce pollution from waste water treatment plants
- Allow Virginia to tackle urban run-off pollution (stormwater) through the regulatory process.

By midmorning many participants headed over to the general assembly building to meet with their elected officials to discuss the important clean water bills. An early lunch was served outdoors near the General Assembly building where many lawmakers were greeted to a steaming bowl of Oyster Stew made from native Virginia oysters.



Getting a steaming bowl of Virginia Oyster Stew, (photo lmuller)

Rally activists then gathered together at the Bell Tower to hear Governor Tim Kaine speak in support of clean water bills including funding for the Best Management Practices (BMP)bill.

Clean Water Rally participants were reminded that state budgets are very tight this year, but that does not mean to stop advocating for clean water. It was a very informative and successful day for Clean Water in Virginia.



Orange County to Build "Green" School

by Linda Hiross

With fewer new schools being built locally these days, it is heartwarming to know that the new Orange County Middle School on Rte. 601, currently planned to open in 2010, has been designed as a "Green" school. If all of the minimal architectural, building and landscape requirements are met, the new school could obtain a "silver" LEED certification; by meeting contractual requirements above those already planned, the school may ultimately be rated at the "gold" level of certification.

LEED is the acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a national rating system developed by the US Green Building Council. Many adjacent mid-Atlantic states have green schools, but there are few in Virginia.

Kudos to the Orange County School Board and Board of Supervisors for their efforts; Orange County taxpayers will be thanking them for years to come.

A Note From Our New Political Chair

by Eric Lawrence Stott

2009 is another election year for Virginia ! As your new Political Chair, I have invited Republican and Democratic gubernatorial candidates to attend one of our meetings before June. This years primaries will be held June 9, 2009.

Also, any local candidates who are running for office in our Rappahannock Group region are welcome to come to one of our monthly meetings. Please forward all candidate information to me at the following e-mail address:

ericlawrencestott@yahoo.com.

Thank you.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Friend or Foe?

America's water, rivers and lakes are at risk from giant, corporate-owned factory farms which are fouling our water with pathogens and chemicals. The air around these farms is contaminated with suspended dust particles, which have been linked to asthma, bronchitis and other diseases. Our government wants to pass legislation which would allow factory farms to be free from health and environmental laws. Support Sierra Club's effort to keep our water clean and our air friendly. The hogs have gone wild, now it's our turn.

Cause a stink. JOIN Sierra Club.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone (____) _____

Email _____

Join today and receive
a FREE Sierra Club
Weekender Bag!


 Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Exp. Date ____/____/____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

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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RG Program schedule

Programs Contact: Emily Bowman 540-746-8215

March 12, 2009, 7-9 pm, UMC, Fredericksburg

Program: Community Supported Agriculture

Speaker: Leslie Leahy, Treas./Sec'y local FACSAP

Come find out how well the community is doing supporting our local farmers, and what you can do to reduce the cost of food and improve the environment by buying more local produce thru Community supported Agricultural initiatives

April 9 2009, 7-9 pm, UMC, Fredericksburg

Program: Uranium Mining in Virginia

Speaker: Todd Benson, Piedmont Environmental Council

Learn more about uranium mining in Virginia and consequential impacts to Virginia's environment.

May 14, 2009, 7-9 pm, UMC, Fredericksburg

Program: Crow's Nest: Past and Present

Speaker: Hal Wiggins, conservationist, biologist and author of "Field Guide to Crow's Nest"

Learn about the history, the ecological splendor, and current state of Crow's Nest by noted author and conservationist Hal Wiggins.

Saturday June 13, 2009 : Annual Members Picnic

Alum Spring Park, Fredericksburg 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Outings/EVENTS

Outings Contact: Jim Lynch 540-775-7002

Outings Leader Training: Date TBA. Do you like to plan hikes and other outdoor adventures? If you or anyone you know would like to become a Sierra Club Outings Leader, an on-line course is also available to accommodate your busy schedule! Contact Jim Lynch at 540-775-7002 for more information.

Saturday, March 14, St. Patrick's Day Trail Celebration on the Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail, King George, 10:00 AM. Hikes, hayrides and other activities. There will be a "scavenger hunt" to help hikers sharpen their orienteering and observational skills. Geocaching enthusiasts will give demonstrations and discuss caches hidden on the trail. Cost: Voluntary contributions accepted. (Suggest: \$10 pp, \$25 p/family) Light lunch provided/bonfire later on. Sponsored by the Friends of the DRHT. Not a Sierra Club event. Contact <http://www.friendsdrht.org/>

Saturday, March 21, Old Rag Hike, Shenandoah NP. Learn about the geological history of this ancient mountain and the Appalachian range. Meet at 9 am at Old Rag parking lot, or 7:15 am at Ukrop's, F'burg. Trip time: 7 hrs R/T over 7.5 mi. We will be hiking the main trail of Old Rag. Difficulty: Medium/hard with some basic rock scrambling. Bring: Water and lunch or substantial snack. Dress for the weather and wear good hiking shoes. Hike will be postponed if there is significant chance of rain or if it has rained during the 48 hours prior. Sign up/info: Roland Herrmann at rolandmh@verizon.net.

Saturday, April 11, Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail, 8:00 am. 20-mile hike. This is a long hike, so good prior preparation is a must. Meet at the multi-purpose area, Rt. 605 off of Rt. 3 in King George. Plan on about 10 hours total. We'll hike at slightly more than 2 mph pace. Contact Jim Lynch at 540-775-7002.

Saturday, May 9th, Second Annual "Tails and Trails" The event will feature games for dogs and kids, popular dog and owner hikes of varying distances. Food service available. Sponsored by the Friends of the Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail and the King George Animal Rescue League. Cost: Voluntary contributions accepted. Not a Sierra Club event. Contact: <http://www.friendsdrht.org/>

Be sure to check out our latest outings/events on our website:

www.virginia.sierraclub.org/rg/

Green Tips

Spring is just around the corner and for the fair weather campers, camping season has arrived. Nothing is more inviting than a warm campfire to share great stories or to toast a marshmallow or three. (two is never enough). Sierra Club's "Green Tips" offers up a reminder about building camp fires and its worth passing along:



"While campfires are fun and comforting, remember to burn only fallen wood. Don't cut down branches from a living tree. Don't clear a new piece of ground to make a fire. Some campgrounds provide you with a place to build a fire. Look for previously cleared places and reuse those if possible."

Also, observe any posted signs regarding fire conditions. Some areas of the country are experiencing drought conditions and open fires of any sort may be prohibited.

More Green Tips please web site:
<http://sierraclub.typepad.com/greenlife/>



Sierra Club National Taking to the Air (waves)

It used to be that radio and broadcast choices were limited to the geographical locations of the broadcasters. Not anymore! With the advent of on-line radio/video streaming and podcasting, listeners can "tune in" to stations and programs across the county and around the world. Sierra Club streams its own ½ hour radio program every Saturday on KKGN-am (San Francisco). Details on free podcasts and web streaming here: http://sierraclub.typepad.com/sierra_club_radio/ Sierra Club National is partnering with Sundance Channel in presenting the "Sierra Club Chronicles". Find schedules and more information at Sundance Channel link: <http://www.sundancechannel.com/thegreen>

NEON: National Ecological Observatory Network and Ecology Research

by Linda Muller

Imagine taking an environmental "pulse" of the United States. Given the diversity of the ecological/climatological make-up of the U.S i.e. desert, subtropical, tundra , plains, mountains, etc, it would require a massive continental scale "observatory" to undertake such a feat. Enter NEON. NEON stands for National Ecological Observatory Network. NEON, Inc. is a not for profit scientific research and educational organization, set up for the purpose of measuring a variety of impacts and conditions of twenty (20) geographically defined environmental "domains" in the United States(including Alaska,Hawaii and Puerto Rico). The state of Virginia is included in two domain classifications: the Mid-Atlantic Domain and Appalachian-Cumberland Plateau Domain.

Established in 2005 and funded through the National Science Foundation, NEON Inc.'s Mission is:

"Identify and understand critical variations and interactions in environmental drivers that will enable forecasting the state of ecological systems for the advancement of science and the benefit of society."

Proposed impact studies include climate change, land use, invasive species, biogeochemistry, ecohydrology, biodiversity, and disease ecology. Founding members of NEON include leading universities across the country including Virginia's very own George Mason University and the University of Virginia.

NEON Inc. is still moving through its initial stages of development and will require a few years to be fully operational. NEON Inc. represents an unprecedented collaboration of scientific and educational resources to help better understand the current and future state of our U.S. ecology. For more information on NEON, please refer to the website:
<http://www.neoninc.org/>

MEMBER ADDRESS CHANGES: Send old and new addresses and a Sierra Club label to Sierra Club Member Services, PO Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80328-2968; phone 415-977-5653; or e-mail to address.changes@sierraclub.org For non-member subscription inquiries and address changes, call toll-free 1-800-765-7904, or write to Sierra, PO Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80328.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES: Members who wish to change their local SC group assignment to another local group must contact SC National Membership Services at 415-977-5653, or e-mail your request to membership.services@sierraclub.org