

DEC 2007 / JAN 2008 / FEB 2008

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Serving the Residents of
 Culpeper, Orange, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Fredericksburg,
 Caroline, King George, and Westmoreland



UPCOMING
--Meetings and Events--

**Innovation and Tradition Blend to
 Create Award-Winning Land Use
 Design in Spotsylvania**

Thurs, December 13, 7-9:00 PM
HOLIDAY PARTY



We shared the work, now come share the cheer! Yummy holiday treats and delicious entertainment by popular area folk-singer/guitarist Bob Gramann. We'll have a holiday basket raffle and plenty of last minute gift ideas! **Admission Charge:** Bring an item for the Fredericksburg Food Pantry! A jolly good time for all. Invite a friend to come along! C-U there!



SPECIAL FILM PROGRAM:
"DIET FOR A NEW AMERICA"
January 5, 10 am-1 pm
Rappahannock Regional Library
1201 Caroline Street, F'burg

Join the Vegetarian Group and host John Robbins, author of the Pulitzer Prize winning book "Diet for a New America" as he takes us on a video journey into the truth about the American food production system and the health consequences of a diet based on animal products. Learn how to make good food choices for yourself and your family. Then, join fellow moviegoers for a potluck lunch at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship next door.

See **Programs**, page 5

An EPA program has recognized Aikido in Fredericksburg, a local non-profit martial arts school, for the design of the site for their future new headquarters. Aikido chose to use Low-Impact Development (LID) techniques as part of its site design. Their innovative approach resulted in receipt of a leadership award in the non-profit category from the Low Impact Development Recognition Program, sponsored by EPA Region III.

The program at Aikido is modeled after the Iwama Dojo in Japan where Aikido was developed, which emphasizes environmental stewardship, appreciation of the outdoors and connection with the natural world, in addition to martial arts training. The Dojo facility was designed using low-impact development, which minimizes negative impacts on the environment and provides opportunities to observe and interact with our natural surroundings.

According to design engineer Doug Beisch of the Williamsburg Environmental Group, "The integration of LID techniques into site design and planning (using functional landscapes, vegetated biofiltration practices and natural resource enhancement) holds great promise for reducing water quality impacts and stream channel degradation normally associated with land development. We were very excited to be able to work with Aikido in Fredericksburg to develop alternatives to conventional storm water management that are more consistent with their environmental stewardship ethic."

Spotsylvania County Department of Code Compliance environmental engineer Richard Street noted that, "LID was best defined by Thomas Jefferson as the ability to infiltrate or re-infiltrate the water as nature did before any form of land-disturbing activity occurred. This was found in his papers for farming practices and is the definition that Spotsylvania feels best describes what true LID is. The Aikido Dojo has incorporated many of the principles and practices set out as guidelines for LID, and is the first plan in Spotsylvania County to use multiple best management practices in conservation areas to sustain water quality and quantity at the same time. This is a very good pilot project, and we are proud to assist with education and outreach to explain the true principles of low-impact development."

Aikido Instructor Aviv Goldsmith acknowledges Street and (now Director of Planning) Wanda Parrish for their understanding during the permitting and design phase of the project. Says Goldsmith, "They were both helpful in letting us know what was possible, and what would be difficult, in terms of the County codes and design manuals. We were pleased to be recognized by the LID Center for this innovative site design. Other agencies have taken notice as well. Earlier this year, we received a mini-grant from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Chesapeake Bay Program, to produce educational and interpretive materials on the

See **Land Use Design**, page 4

**RG ON THE WEB:**

www.virginia.sierraclub.org/rg/

VIRGINIA CHAPTER:

www.virginia.sierraclub.org

SC NATIONAL:

www.sierraclub.org

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Volunteers Needed in All Areas!



It's hard to believe that winter's here, and another year almost gone. The Rappahannock Group has made good progress this year on a number of fronts, especially our goal of becoming more involved with the local governments to move environmental issues to the top of their agendas. Our "Greenways Initiative" and "Cool Cities/Cool Counties" projects have become true regional efforts, and we're very happy to be working side-by-side with our elected officials to make this a more livable community for all citizens.

All of us are very excited to see the great changes in global attitude toward climate change in the past year. We Sierrans are no longer the lone voice in the desert on this, as our governments, media, businesses and communities have finally awakened to the critical impacts we have on the world around us. That's a very good thing.

But with the end of the year comes necessary change, including the end of my two-year tenure as Chair of the Rappahannock Group. I'm very pleased with the improvements the ExCom has made these two years: redefining the responsibilities of committee chairs, improving our communications, re-focusing our efforts in the community, strengthening our relationships with the University of Mary Washington and the Fredericksburg Parks Department, and building partnerships with local governments to effect real change in the region. I'm sure whoever takes over as Chair in January will do a great job in keeping this group moving forward.

Our best wishes go out to all the candidates who won seats in the VA General Assembly and Supervisory Boards, especially our endorsees. We look forward to working with all of them.

My thanks to each and every Sierra Club member for making it possible for us to carry the flag of environmental stewardship throughout the Rappahannock valley. It has been a great honor to serve.

See you at the Holiday party on December 13!



THE GREEN LIFE: Did you know that if all US households received and paid their bills on-line, it would eliminate more than 800,000 tons of paper waste each year?

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.

Students Helping Honduras – And So Can You!

by Rachel Mason

When I arrived in El Progreso, Honduras on a recent student trip, I instantly noticed the overpowering smell of smoke coming from heaps and heaps of burning trash. When I asked Shin Fujiyama, our host and founder of the non-profit Students Helping Honduras (SHH), why these people hazardously burned garbage right outside their homes, he told me there was no one to pick it up! After passing many rivers and rural roadsides littered with rotting garbage, I made a decision. When I returned to the University of Maryland in September, I was going to rally the forces of SHH to make El Progreso CLEAN and GREEN!

This fall, members of SHH and the UMW Ecology Club have taken on two projects. One is a micro-economic project that we discovered at the Washington, D.C. Green Festival. We found a company called “Trash Bags” that weaves snack chip bags and recycled newspaper to create unique purses. Currently, the CEO of “Trash Bags” is working with Shin and his sister, Cosmo, to get the refugee village, Siete de Abril, involved. “Trash Bags” would provide the families of Siete de Abril an income and reduce litter.

Our long-term goal is to bring a reliable recycling and waste management program to El Progreso, Honduras. Ciempre, a revolutionary recycling program in Brazil, has been the best model. Instead of trying to make a carbon copy of America’s system, we plan to use low-cost carts and bicycles to transport trash like Brazil. During our upcoming December trip, we will be investigating how to become a waste management corporation in Honduras. SHH knows these projects will be challenging, but with heart, passion and drive, we can make our green vision reality.

If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact me by e-mail at rmason@umw.edu. We could use ecology or entrepreneurship expertise, networking connections or possible partners in recycling and waste management, and donations of any size.

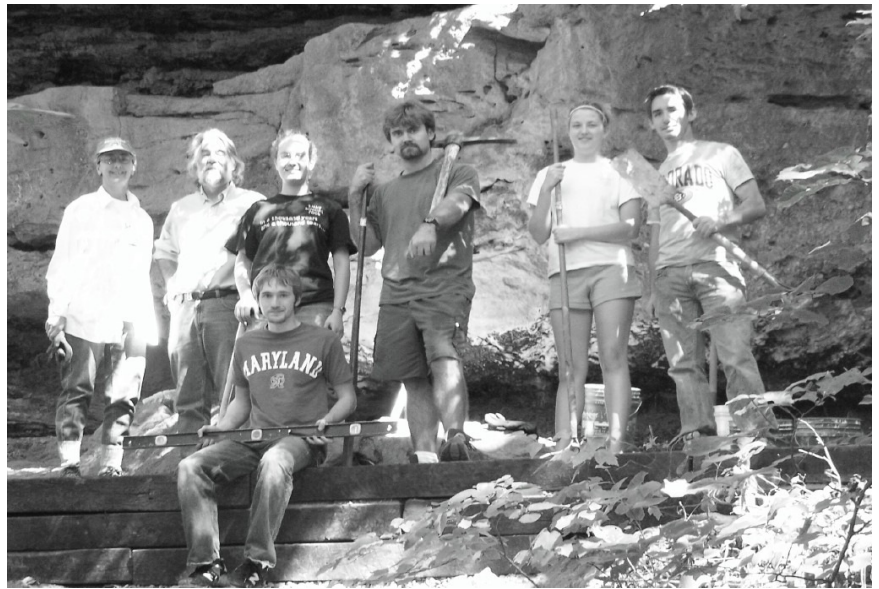


Photo: Sandy Howson

In September, RG members worked with the UMW Ecology Club on the strenuous task of rebuilding a section of trail at Alum Spring Park in Fredericksburg. Shown (l to r) are RG’s Donna Pienkowski and Scott Howson; and UMW students Elisa Walker, David Younes (seated), Morgan Riley, Laura Pilati and RG’s Fall Intern Mike Ford. Not pictured is Sandy Howson. The RG works closely with Fredericksburg Parks on several projects every year.

UMW Ecology Club Leads the Way to a Greener Campus

by Mike Ford, RG Fall Intern

This fall, the UMW Ecology Club has focused on three major activities to help educate our members and fellow students and faculty: the DC Green Festival, Powershift 2007, and a campus light bulb exchange.

The DC Green Festival in October featured great “how-to” workshops, a fair-trade pavilion, organic cuisine and live music. Like a big trade convention, it was an overwhelming experience and increased our awareness of just how many “green” products and services are available.

In early November, Powershift 2007 was the first-ever national youth climate summit. More than 5500 students from all over the nation attended this historic event at the Univ. of MD College Park campus. The weekend was packed with panel discussions, workshops and speakers on environmental issues. US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Ralph Nader were keynote speakers.

In an effort to put our newfound skills from Powershift to use, we decided to conclude our semester with a campus project: a light-bulb exchange. The club is working with Residence Life at UMW to exchange incandescent light bulbs for compact fluorescents in student dormitories. The goal of our project is to help educate students, while encouraging them to make more environmentally-friendly lifestyle choices.

While this wraps up our activities for the fall, we could not have achieved all that we have without the support, encouragement and leadership of RG. Many activities, such as building the retaining wall at Alum Spring (see photo above), would not have been possible without this special partnership between our two organizations. We are also thrilled that more Ecology Club members have taken an interest in pressing issues within the Fredericksburg community, and are eager to take advantage of the opportunities this special partnership provides.

The Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) Legislative Workshop will be held on Saturday, DECEMBER 1 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm in the Capitol Bldg, House Room 3, Richmond, VA. Agenda: Briefs on priority conservation issues and bills for 2008.

Contact VCN at:

vcn@vcnva.org or

Call 804-644-0283

To Car Pool Call:

Doris Whitfield 540-775-7856

**VCN LOBBY DAY
JANUARY 21, 2008**

Land Use Design, cont. from pg 1

environmentally-friendly aspects of the site design.

To make this information more widely available, it is posted it on our website <http://www.aikidoinn.com/LIDBrochure.pdf>.”

Frank Lloyd Wright believed “Nothing more powerfully creates heritage than the imaginative use and stewardship of land.” Aikido in Fredericksburg is looking forward to participating in the local heritage. Site preparation by a local firm, Site Prep LLC, is almost complete. Aikido is currently negotiating with a general contractor for the construction of its new headquarters building on the site using a “green design” developed by LEED-certified Owens Architects of Lawrenceburg, Kentucky.

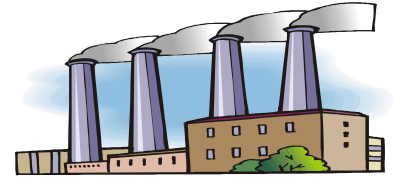
When completed, the Aikido complex will include state-of-the-art practice space, an outdoor training area, a forest path with meditation areas, and a community garden. Aikido is hopeful that additional monies will be contributed to their Building Fund Drive to help finalize the facilities.

More information on the project and how to support Aikido’s efforts is available on their website at <http://www.aikidoinn.com/index.php?page=shindojo>, or by calling 540-582-9600.

Editor’s Note: *Aviv Goldsmith and his wife, Donna Pienkowski, have been active members of the Rappahannock Group of the Sierra Club for many years. They live in Spotsylvania.*

No New Coal!!

by Hilary Lufkin, RG Fall Intern



More than 35 students from the UMW Ecology Club attended the *Powershift 2007* Conference at the University of MD, College Park from November 2-5. The program offered more than 200 workshops on topics like climate change, student activism, leadership, environmental justice and travel. Speakers included Rep. Edward Markey, Chair of the Select Committee on Global Warming, and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. The weekend culminated with a Lobby Day on Capitol Hill where students rallied on the West Lawn and met with Senators and Representatives from all 50 states to discuss the *1Sky Campaign*.

The *1Sky* vision holds that any effective legislation passed to combat global warming must contain three key provisions: 1) The creation of a Green Jobs corps and funding for new jobs in industries like solar cell innovation, windmill manufacturing and urban planning, among others; 2) Cut total US carbon emissions by 80% by the year 2050, and; 3) Call for an immediate moratorium on all new coal plants in the US.

The UMW campus is working with Wise Energy for Virginia, a coalition made up of members of the Sierra Club, Chesapeake Climate Action Network, Appalachian Mountain Stewards, and the Piedmont Environmental Council, among others, to take on this last platform right here in Virginia.

Dominion Power has proposed building a new \$1.6 billion coal plant in Wise County, VA that would run exclusively on coal from VA sources. Such a plant would accelerate mountaintop removal mining (MTR), pollute our air, and destroy the already impoverished economy of Wise County. We are working to stop the licensing of this plant set for a State Corporation Commission hearing on January 8, 2008 in Richmond by educating the public about the dangers of MTR to our environment and the economy by rallying support for the “No New Coal” coalition.

One significant way you can support our efforts is to sign the petition that asks Dominion Power to NOT build this plant, but invest in clean energy technologies like wind—a viable alternative to the proposed new Wise County coal plant. As a coalition, we hope to collect 100,000 signatures by January to show Dominion how united VA citizens are when it comes to demanding clean energy for our state, and how dedicated we are to combating global warming.



A Message About Food Lion “Shop and Share”

The RG Executive Committee has decided not to participate in the Food Lion Shop and Share Program in 2008. Many of the Food Lion stores in our area were converted to Bloom supermarkets, and Bloom does not participate in this program. If you still shop at a Food Lion supermarket and would like your MVP card charitable dollars reallocated to another worthy organization, please go to the Food Lion website at www.foodlion.com and reassign your MVP card number before December 31.

**Thurs, January 10, 7-9 PM
Monthly Meeting: Recycling**

Julie May of the Stafford Recycle Board will speak about the changes in the recycling program in Stafford and Fredericksburg. She will present the new innovations instituted by the Recycle Board and show how they are succeeding.

**Thurs, February 14, 7-9 PM
Monthly Meeting: Water Quality Monitoring in Stafford County**

Patricia Kurpiel from Friends of Stafford Creeks will present a program on water quality monitoring in Stafford County and how monitoring is affecting County policies. Patricia runs the water monitoring program in Stafford County and has been active in land use and water quality issues for many years.

**Thursday, March 13, 7-9 PM
Monthly Meeting**



Speaker: Carol Lena Miller

Carol Miller, George Washington National Forest organizer for the Virginia Wilderness Committee, will give a PowerPoint presentation on their efforts to pass legislation that provides permanent protection to wild areas on public land in Virginia. Organized in 1969, the Virginia Wilderness Committee is a citizens' organization dedicated to the preservation of Virginia's natural heritage.

RSG Membership Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month, except in July and August, at the United Methodist Church, 308 Hanover Street, in downtown Fredericksburg from 7-9 pm. Meetings are open to all members and the general public. For directions, please call our Hospitality Chair, or consult the UM Church website at www.fumcvva.org.

RSG Executive Committee meets on the first Weds of the month from 6-8 pm at the administrative offices of FOR on Fall Hill Avenue in F'burg. All ExCom meetings are open to SC members, and their guests (with prior notice). Please check our website for any possible last minute cancellations, changes to the meeting schedules, or special forums and events.

To place advertisements or classifieds in this newsletter or to become a newsletter sponsor, please contact Linda Hiross at 540-972-9640.

FOR Launches "Livable Neighborhood" Water Stewardship Program

by Rebecca Kurylo

Merely wanting a healthy river in your community is not enough: it takes action to get results. Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR) is using this premise in their newly-launched Livable Neighborhood Water Stewardship Program. Those actions that make our neighborhoods healthier and more attractive also help restore our rivers and streams.

The Water Stewardship Program gathers neighbors together to implement strategies for a healthier river. We are looking for Team Leaders who are passionate about connecting with their neighbors and lowering their own impact on the environment by using fewer toxins in the home, saving an average of 22,000 gallons of water per year, creating water-friendly landscaping, and many more environmentally-friendly ideas.

For those who are interested in joining this unique program, Team Leader training will be held on Saturday, February 9, 2008. For more information and to register, please contact Rebecca Kurylo, program leader, at livable.neighborhood@riverfriends.org. You can also find more information on the FOR website at: www.riverfriends.org by clicking on "Programs."

The Living Shoreline

by Helen Sanders

During recent rains, the water in the Rappahannock River turned brown. It doesn't take a hurricane to cause serious erosion. Far too often the wrong methods are used to keep yards from washing into the river, or even more often, no method at all. The installation of a "living shoreline" can benefit property owners and the environment. Erosion occurs most often where the shoreline lacks natural vegetation.



On the campus of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science there is a demonstration site showing how employing a variety of techniques can prevent shoreline erosion. On one side of the boat channel are marsh grasses and small shrubs, and on the other side is a wooden bulkhead. The living shoreline is thriving. The bulkhead is ready to be replaced for a second time.

There are different types of living shorelines. Some use vegetation alone, a method known as nonstructural stabilization. Some have rocks, rubble, oyster/shell reefs or wooden structures with vegetation, called hybrid stabilization. Both provide habitat for wildlife and improve water quality.

If you live at the edge of a lake, river or stream, employing one or more of these erosion-preventing structures along your shoreline will help keep downstream waters safe and clean for humans and wildlife alike. For more information on living shorelines, visit the Virginia State Department of Environmental Quality website located at www.deq.state.va.us/coastal/livingshore.html.



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All Creatures Great and Small



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- John Muir

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Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
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Students/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

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 newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 37068, Boulder, CO 80521-2068 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org



TAKE A HIKE!



As we go to press, details of planned RG outings are not yet available for 2008. New events will be posted on our website as plans are finalized. Please be sure to check the RG website regularly for any new additions, cancellations, contact/sign-up info and other general information.

SIERRA CLUB EVENTS:

We need outings leaders! If you or anyone you know would like to become a Sierra Club Outings Leader, please contact Jim Lynch at 540-775-7002 for more information.

Saturday, January 5 – Film: “Diet for a New America”. Central Rappahannock Regional Library, 1201 Caroline St, F’burg. 10-11 am. Free admission. Followed by a potluck luncheon at the Unitarian Universalist Church; bring a dish or donate. Contact: Christine Carlson at ricardct@yahoo.com.

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST:

(Not sponsored by Sierra Club)

Enjoy nature hikes and seasonal conservation events with other environmental groups in our area!

Saturday, December 8 – Trim a Tree for Wildlife, Caledon Natural Area, Caledon Rd, King George. \$5/pp. 10 am to Noon. Bring the whole family to this hands-on workshop where you will string edible garlands to use in your yard at home, a great way to conserve wildlife by providing food for our feathered friends during the cold days of winter. Reservations required: Call 540-663-3861.

Saturday, December 15 – Tundra Swan Tour, Caledon Natural Area, Caledon Rd, King George. 9 am. \$6/pp. Take a ride to Jones Pond to watch the Tundra swans as they take up residence for the winter. You will also enjoy watching eagles and a great variety of other, equally uncommon waterfowl that overwinter in this important Potomac River wetland. Reservations required. Call Caledon at 540-663-3861.

Saturday, December 15 – A Night Volksmarch. 3 or 6 miles.

A fun event where families can enjoy the holiday lights and seasonal beauty of downtown Fredericksburg. Start between 3:30 and 6:30 pm; finish by 9:30 pm. Start and finish at the Fredericksburg Visitors Center, corner of Caroline and Charlotte Sts. Free walk and refreshments. Children under age 18 must be with an adult; pets must be leashed and cleaned up after.

Saturday, December 15 – “Waterfall and Wildflower Series Hike”

– Shenandoah National Park. A 12-mile circuit hike with difficult/tough 1.6-mile bushwhack to Miller Head Falls. The hike will include a climb to Hawksbill and the upper falls on the White Oak Canyon. Total elevation gain is 4200 ft. To reserve, contact Jack Thorsen at 703-339-6716. Sponsored by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC).