# **Upcoming Events**



**Holiday Party** 

# Thursday, December 10 7-9:00 p.m. United Methodist Church Fredericksburg

Join us for our Annual Holiday Celebration. We will enjoy sharing conservation ideas, issues and projects and planning for 2010. Entertainment will be provided by folk-singer and guitarist Bob Gramann. Refreshments and delicious treats will be served. We will also have silent auction gift baskets and an assortment of Sierra Club gift items for purchase. Canned Item(s) for the FUMC Food Pantry is appreciated. Free and open to the public. Information call Doris: 540-775-7856.

# EPA Chesapeake Bay Clean Up Meeting: 12/17/09

Officials from the EPA will meet in Fredericksburg as part of a series of 13 meetings spanning 6 states and the District of Columbia to inform the public about the new regulatory approach to cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers. Express your support for enforceable measures to address nutrient and sediment pollution. Meeting will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Wingate Inn, 20 Sanford Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22406. Wingate Inn is located off Route 17 in Stafford County, west of I-95.

## Go Green! Annual America Recycles

by Linda C. Muller



Kathy Rivers and Eric Lawrence Stott Go Green! America Recycles Kick-Off (photo Linda C. Muller)

America Recycles Day , November 15, is the only nationally recognized day dedicated to encouraging Americans to recycle and to buy recycled products. This year the RGSC Recycling Committee with Co-Sponsor 10,000 Villages at Central Park, scheduled a week of "Go Green" America Recycles activities to help raise awareness of the importance of recycling. Eric Lawrence Stott, Chair of RGSC's Recycling Committee and Kathy Rivers, manager of 10,000 Villages, solicited the support of local area businesses and organizations to help with the week's events.

On Sunday November 8<sup>th</sup> a special "Kick-Off" was held at Ten Thousand Villages that included refreshments and a demonstration on recycled giftwrap. Throughout the week, participants received America Recycles "punch card" credits from businesses and organizations that sponsored "Go Green" activities. Scheduled activities included touring the King George Landfill, touring a "certified green" building, donating used cell phones, donating used running shoes, donating used corks among others. A special participant's reception was held on November 15<sup>th</sup> at 10,000 Villages. At the reception, participants who attended at least six "Go Green" activities were eligible for special gift drawings.

RGSC thanks all of the businesses and organizations that helped contribute to and supported the First Annual Go Green! America Recycles Event: Ten Thousand Villages, Carrabba's of Central Park, America's Best Contacts & Eyeglasses, Navy Federal Credit Union, VA Runner, PNC Bank, Camille's, Rappahannock Goodwill Industries, King George Landfill, Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity Resale Store, Party Maker, Massage Envy, Bonefish Grill, Edible Arrangements, Ci-Ci's Pizza, Target, Chik-Fil-A Central Park, Lifeway Christian Store. A special thanks to Kathy Rivers of Ten Thousand Villages, Eric Lawrence Stott, Chair, RGSC Recycling Committee and John Broughton of GWRC's Green Government Commission.

#### **QUICK NEWS**

# Rappahannock Group on Facebook



Thanks to RGSC's Fall Intern Laura Pilati, RG has a new Facebook page. Facebook offers a convenient way to stay in touch with RG members and friends. Share events and updates. To sign up with Facebook go to: www.facebook.com

#### **RGSC Group E-mail**



RGSC is initiating a group email for RG Club members and friends. The group email list will be used for Club announcements, notices, and future enewsletters. Please sign up by emailing to our group email address: <a href="mailto:rappsierraclub@gmail.com">rappsierraclub@gmail.com</a>



# RG EXCOM Candidates Ballots and Information Vote deadline 12/31/09

Be sure to check out the listing of RG EXCOM (Executive Committee)
Candidates and Ballot on **page 7** of this newsletter. We are filling three Executive Committee positions . RG Club members must mail their ballot **postmarked no later than 12/31/09**.

#### SC Wildlife Calendars

# "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in." ~Henry David Thoreau

As a reminder, we will have Sierra Club Wildlife Calendars available for purchase at our annual Holiday Meeting on Thursday, December 10.

What better way to mark off those special occasions, meetings, or engagements than with a Sierra Club Wildlife Calendar. Proceeds help fund RGSC activities.

#### NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

by Doris Whitfield

#### Solving the Climate Puzzle One Piece At A time

The Sierra Club's Top 2010 goal: "protecting land and species while combating climate change and those who are causing it". Sierra Club's "BIG PICTURE CAMPAIGN" was planned and organized to do just that, generate grassroot support for President Obama's promise to fight global warming, reduce our countries dependency on coal and oil while building a more healthy-sustainable-renewable-clean energy economy for our future. How do we accomplish this? By solving the climate puzzle one piece at a time, and by aggressive non-stop coordinated grassroot action and follow-up. For extra reference see the 2009 November/December Sierra Magazine, by Senior Editor, Paul Rauber, online link here:

http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/200911/climate.aspx

The good news: the House narrowly passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act (Waxman-Markey Bill) late June by a 219 -212 vote. And the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is finally on board aggressively tackling global warming. The bad news: it's business as usual on Capital Hill. According to the League of Conservation Voters, "big oil spent \$120 million this year" working to keep clean energy legislation from a final senate vote.

In April EPA took one of the first steps toward energy regulations by proposing that global warming pollution endangers our health and welfare.

Small steps to the puzzle were taken in July when EPA determined that 79 mountaintop-removal permits under review "would likely violate" the Clean Water Act, followed by a proposal that would eliminate the streamlined permit process for surface mining. In September Sierra Club and the Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition joined together in holding local energy rallies across the state. UMW Ecology Club worked with our Group to coordinate a successful Hurkamp Park Energy Rally.

RGSC's October 8th, Coal County preview provided a dramatic look at modern coal mining and it's negative economic, health and environmental impacts. Virginia Chapter followed by organizing participation in an Army Corp of Engineers public hearing on mountaintop removal coal mining in Big Stone Gap in Wise County.

A big step is pending in EPA's decision to finally regulate coal ash as a hazardous waste. Coal produces half of the nation's electricity and one third of our global-warming gases, resulting in 131 million tons of coal ash piling up annually in 584 dumps across the country polluting our land, air and water. Regulated standards with consistent oversight are needed to ensure safe deposition of hazardous mine waste and power plant ash in affected communities.

Its important to contact Senators Warner and Webb and your congressional representative and let them know that only a total ban on any new mountain-removal coal mining disposal is acceptable. The Sierra Club website provides a coal resource page with easy links to write your elected officials:

http://www.sierraclub.org/coal/resources/default.aspx

Solving these problems while increasing renewable energy alternatives through technological innovation and resourceful conservation will go a long way to "solving the climate puzzle one piece at a time". (con't pg 3)

As importantly, it will also help prepare the United States and President Obama for taking the leadership role in December's Copenhagen Climate Conference and Global Warming.

Congratulations are due, Eric Stott, Recycling Chair, and committee members with assistance from Kathy Rivers, Ten Thousand Villages for an outstanding America Recycles Week, Nov. 8-15th. We also welcome our new Club Treasurer: Josephine Dodt.

Please join us for our Holiday Celebration, Dec. 10 with great food, fellowship, & Bob Gramann to entertain us. Doris Whitfield

#### **News from RGSC 2009 Fall Intern**

by Laura Pilati

Hi! My name is Laura, and I have spent the past few months learning and helping as the RG Sierra Club's Fall Intern!

I am a senior at the University of Mary Washington and am double majoring in French and Environmental Science. You may have seen me at Sierra Club meetings over the years--I have been a proud member of the campus Ecology Club since my freshman year and have come to many SC meetings in that time. During my semester as intern I have continued to strengthen the Sierra Club and Ecology Club relationship and have started to create an online database of member email addresses.

#### 1st Annual "Green Screen" Film Festival

Another big project has been to coordinate the year-long environmental film festival hosted by the RGSC and the UMW Ecology Club. You may have heard about our screening of "The 11th Hour" back in October. On November 23rd, we held our second screening--"King Corn." This film is a comedic documentary discussing corn in America. We are scheduling additional films in the future and will keep you posted. Our film screenings are free and open to the campus and entire community! Hope to see you there!

#### **Students Helping Honduras (SHH)**

UMW Student Ashley Cameron displayed hand crafted handbags and clutches made from post-consumer package wrappings by native Hondurans. Each colorful "checkerboard" ecopouch includes the name of the artisan who created the piece. Initiating the Honduran "micro-business" is one of many projects promoted by SHH, a 501(C) 3, non profit organization, with student chapters across the country. More info at the link: http://www.studentshelpinghonduras.org/

# UMW Students And Ecology Club Members Making A Difference

by Linda C. Muller

"To the young people I say, you are a gift to your communities and indeed the world. You are our hope and our future."

From Wangari Maathai's Nobel Lecture, delivered in Oslo, December 10 2004.



"Clean Energy -Bright Future" Rally, Hurkamp Park Fredericksburg 9/17/09 (photo Laura Pilati)

Whether it was helping organize the September 17 "Clean Energy Bright Future" Rally at Hurkamp Park or providing a series of presentations at the November 12, 2009 RGSC meeting, UMW students have been active in promoting pressing environmental issues. At the November 12th RGSC meeting, five UMW students shared personal educational experiences with RGSC members and guests. Each student provided "powerpoint" slides with their discussion and offered a question and answer session after their presentation. Senior **Nate Delano** discussed Sustainability at UMW and provided an overview of UMW's "grade" in the College Sustainability Report Card . UMW received and overall rating of "B-" and pulled "A's" in categories for "Administration", "Student Involvement", and "Transportation". For a complete review of the report card please see: <a href="http://www.umw.edu/sustainability/default.php">http://www.umw.edu/sustainability/default.php</a> Emily Hart discussed her participation in VA Powershift October 2009 -Clean Energy. The three day student conference held at George Mason University, held a variety of workshops including Virginia's green economy, Surrey Coal Plant, environmental justice, and population stabilization. Laura Pilati, the RGSC Fall 2009 Intern, provided an overview of the environment in Grenoble France. Laura attended the University at Grenoble and noted the popularity of bicycling as a regular mode of transportation, which included "rent-a-bike" stands. There are plenty of public transportation choices in Grenoble including trolleys and the super-speed TGV rail system that runs up to 200 mph! Former RGSC Intern Lauren Birney, offered her overview of the environment of Chile. She worked with disadvantaged children in Chile and noted that Chile still has much work to do in protecting its natural resources. Smog is thick in the industrial capital city of Santiago with few transportation options. There is a growing interest in developing wind power in Chile and children enjoyed a special Environment Day. Lauren also visited the striking Torres del Paine National Park, Patagonia. Elise Walker shared her experiences in Argentina. She noted that deforestation, drought and clean water supplies are some of Argentina's urgent environmental concerns. Argentina is a industrialized country that is also grappling with pollution problems. Elise stayed in the city of Mendoza, the 4th largest city in Argentina and is situated in the western part of the country. She had the opportunity to visit Lauren Birney in Chile during her stay! Those in attendance were impressed with all of the student's knowledge and shared experiences.

## RG LEADERSHIP CONTACT LIST

(\*) Denotes Voting ExCom Members

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DOUG FERGUSON: WEBMASTER dougferg@erols.com

Volunteers Needed in All Areas!

**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 go to: <a href="http://virginia.sierraclub.org/RG/contact.html">http://virginia.sierraclub.org/RG/contact.html</a>

RSG Executive Committee meets on the first Thurs. of the month from 6:30-8 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 Muller at 540-907-0198. lcmuller@mindspring.com

# Crow's Nest Awarded 2009 Scenic Viewshed Preservation Award VA Department of Parks and Rec Sponsors Hike

by Linda C. Muller

On October 21, Scenic Virginia presented the 2009 Scenic Viewshed Award to the Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve. The award is the culmination of a long hard effort to preserve the 2,200 acre natural jewel that rests in the eastern edge of Stafford County, which many local Sierra Club members helped worked to preserve. RG Chair Doris Whitfield recalls her first visit to Crow's Nest:

"Those of us who joined Hal Wiggins on September 11th, 2001 for our first visit to Crow's Nest will always remember & treasure the excitement, awe and wonder that we felt as we canoed or kayaked up Potomac creek, landed on the point of the peninsula where we enjoyed a picnic before hiking the mile through quiet woods and open wetlands to the heron rookery where we spotted at least eight large nests in the tall birches. Throughout this amazing "outing" Hal gave us an appreciation of the unique background and history, the endless array of aquatic vegetation, forest plants, flowers, wild life, and bird species that will continue to make this 3000 acres preserve so unique and special. Organizing, joining-in, reaching out, educating, lobbying our local and Virginia elected officials and working to help SAVE CROW"S NEST are all a natural part of being Sierra Club members."

On Saturday, November 7, 2009, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) sponsored a special public hike through Crow's Nest. It was a perfect fall day for a hike; sunny with a large share of leaves all ready off the trees which allowed better viewing of the preserve area. Hal Wiggins was on hand along with DCR staff to help guide and educate the hikers in the our group through a 3 mile walk around Crow's Nest. We witnessed the steep slopes and unique flora including an odd looking "stick" tree called devil's walking stick. This special hike served as a perfect reminder of why we engage in the preservation and protection of environmentally sensitive and ecologically unique sites . Its a gift for future generations.

#### The dedication on the plaque:

"Scenic Virginia presents the 2009 Scenic Viewshed Preservation Award to The Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve, the culmination of 10+ years of work by Federal, state and local officials, dedicated community members, and environmental agencies to transform the nearly 3,000 acres of the beautiful five-mile-long Crow's Nest peninsula in Stafford County into the Commonwealth's

54<sup>th</sup> natural area preserve, in the process preserving 750 acres of tidal and non-tidal wetlands; 21 miles of stream, riparian, and wetland buffers; 2,200 acres of hardwood forest; and substantial wildlife habitat for birds and fish, on a property that played an important role in Native American, Colonial and Civil War histories in Virginia."



Crow's Nest Hike -Hal Wiggins (photo by Linda C. Muller)

## Plan Now!! SC National Club Adventure/Service Outings 2010-2011



If your New Years Resolutions includes experiencing more of the outdoors, visiting National Parks, or volunteer work, you should consider one of the hundreds of Outings offered by the National Sierra Club. There are outings geared to families, beginners and experienced outdoors persons. You can hike, kayak, camp, sail, even dog sled with fellow club members. (Note there were still two spaces left for the Feb 2010 Dog Mushing trip to AK!) In 2009, National Geographic's Traveler Magazine recognized SC's Glacier National Park Outing as one of the "Tours of a Lifetime" adventure trips.

For those interested in volunteer and service work, SC Outings offers special service trips in unique environmental settings. You can help restore native plants on Catalina Island, or perhaps clear invasive species in Kauai. As they are very popular, service trips get booked up quickly so you need to plan now! Link to SC Outings: <a href="https://www.sierraclub.org/outings/national">www.sierraclub.org/outings/national</a>

At the local level, RGSC offers a variety of outings that highlight regional outdoor activities and interests. For more information contact Jim Lynch, RGSC Outings Chair: <a href="mailto:jplynch@crosslink.net">jplynch@crosslink.net</a>



RG ON THE WEB: www.virginia.sierraclub.org/rg/

VIRGINIA CHAPTER: www.virginia.sierraclub.org

SC NATIONAL: www.sierraclub.org

#### **RGSC Member's Adventure**

Been there? Did That? We want to share your unique eco-related experience with our members. In this issue RG Sierra Club Life member **Ed Sandter** shares his lifetime dream of driving cross country with his wife, logging 10,000 miles!

#### See the USA. . . .

by RGSC Member Ed Sandter

When I was young I remember Dinah Shore singing a commercial about seeing the USA in your Chevrolet and the fantasy of making a grand tour of the states had persisted ever since. I had put it off because the immensity of the country and the endless miles seemed daunting, and there were the ever present obligations, but now in my 60s and life growing shorter, the prospect of never making the trip was haunting. My wife and I had left California after more than forty years, leaving family and friends behind to explore and experience the east coast before time took its toll. Going back for visits we had always taken the plane, looking down on a tiny and distant landscape that remained unreal. So this year we finally decided to pass through it rather than over it.

We removed the rear seats of our Dodge Caravan (sorry Chevrolet) and I built a plywood platform which would accommodate an air mattress on top and suitcases, boxes of supplies and cooking gear underneath. With a spirit of adventure we locked up the house and headed west. In a way we felt young and free again, indulging in memories of hippie van travels as Bob Dylan and the Beatles played away. But as we climbed the hills of Appalachia we tuned the radio to bluegrass and country. In traveling across this land of ours, we above all wanted to experience a profound sense of place, both physical and cultural.

That sense of place, however, could be both positive and negative. Through a thin buffer of trees along a road in southwest Virginia we saw a massive mountain top removal operation and I confess a spontaneous "hand signal" and an unprintable utterance before anger gave way to a sigh of melancholy. We had seen photos of this rape of the land, but seeing it live made a real impact. There were also antidotes to the destruction, sprawl and pollution, through a string of legendary landscapes both big and small that define the best of America. Cumberland Falls and Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, the quaint towns of Ste. Genevieve and Hermann, Missouri. Winding down the spine of the Rockies through the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Telluride and Ourav to Mesa Verde. On to the spires of Monument Valley and the depths of the Grand Canyon. After three weeks in California we worked our way home through iconic parks like Yellowstone and the Tetons to little gems like Lemoille Canyon in the Ruby Mountains. Even the much maligned upper midwest held its charms. We were happy and renewed.

When not with family or friends we mostly camped out, cooking on our one-burner stove and snoring away in the back of our van. Our biggest expense was not food or lodging, but gas. After two months and 10,000 miles, the road had become home. We had touched and been touched by the magnificence of this land that must be protected and preserved. So see the USA. . . in any car you please. Time is ticking.



## Volunteers are Key!

Do you have some great ideas for RGSC programs? Perhaps you enjoy organizing and compiling stories for newsletters. Would you like to share your hiking or outings experience with fellow club members? RGSC has volunteer opportunities for members interested in sharing their talents. We are in need of a Programs Chair, newsletter assistant, and outings volunteers. Please contact Doris Whitfield 540-775-7856



# All Creatures Great and Small



"Every good thing, great and small, needs defense"

- John Muir

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## Winter 2009-2010 Program Schedule

All meeting programs are free and open to the public. We do encourage a donation of canned goods for the Fredericksburg United Methodist Church Food Pantry. Guests are always welcomed!

December 10, 2009 Monthly Program Meeting, 7 pm, UMC, F'burg. Annual Holiday Party! We wrap up our year with good cheer with our annual Holiday Party. Relax and unwind with fellow members and guests. We'll review 2009 Club accomplishments and future conservation endeavors. Refreshments, light treats, musical entertainment by Bob Gramann. Silent auction gift baskets and SC Wildlife Calendars available for purchase.

January 14<sup>th</sup> 2010: Monthly Program Meeting, 7 pm, UMC, F'burg. Community Power Initiative, Al Weed, Chairman of Public Policy Virginia. A discussion of the Community Power Initiative,(CPI) a model of how localities can create their own power using alternatives to coal including thermal energy for heating and cooling.

February 11<sup>th</sup> 2010: Monthly Meeting, 7 pm UMC, F'burg. VA Conservation Legislative Up-Date. Nathan Lott, Exec. Dir. of Virginia Conservation Network will offer an overview of important environmental issues and key legislation in the 2010 VA General Assembly including energy efficiency and Chesapeake Bay Restoration.

#### **RGSC Outings Schedule**

please check our website for updates http://virginia.sierraclub.org/RG/

#### Other Outings/Events (not sponsored by RGSC)

Dec 11-13 Weekend Birding in Northern Neck, sponsored by the Audobon Society Northern Virginia. highlights include Washington's Birthplace, spots along the Coastal VA Birding Trail. 703-620-2540. web site:http://www.audubonva.org/

Dec 12<sup>th</sup> "Get Out The Dirt" training at Friends of the Rappahannock. Learn to identify and report sediment pollution on construction sites. Trained volunteers will become local monitors collecting crucial field observations, to be used in stopping polluters. Addtl training dates: Jan 16<sup>th</sup> and Feb 6<sup>th</sup>. Contact 540-373-3448, or email jamie.brunkow@riverfriends.org

#### Dec 19. Tundra Swan Tour at Caledon State Park.

Take a ride to Jones Ponds to see these magnificent birds. Please note tour may be cancelled if birds are not congregating on the pond.540-663-3861.

http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state\_parks/cal.shtml

#### Jan 18, 2010 Conservation Lobby Day, Richmond VA

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$15 lunch included.

Virginia Conservation Network annual Lobby Day focusing on energy efficiency, smart growth and historic preservations. Opportunity to schedule and meet with your legislators. Call VCN

804-644-0283 website: <a href="www.vcnva.org">www.vcnva.org</a> Carpool: Doris Whitfield 540-775-7856

Carol Buffum has lived in Fredericksburg since 2000, and has actively participated in Friends of

the Rappahannock River Cleanups, Canal cleanups, tabling with Sierra Club and the Vegetarian Group at Earth Day. Carol has 20 years experience working in mediation both in Fredericksburg

and Atlanta GA. She is civically engaged and has volunteered with many campaigns and elections. Always living her environmental principles, Carol is a vegetarian mainly for

environmental reasons, and she and her family moved downtown to a smaller home to simplify

and reduce(reuse and recycle!), and so that she could walk to her work as a Mediator. She looks

Paula is a life member of the Sierra Club and lives in historic Fredericksburg since Dec. 2007

with her husband who is also a life member. She has hiked, climbed, mountaineered and skiied

We will be filling three seats on the ExCom this year, with new members serving from January, 10 through December 2011. Please mail your ballots so we receive them no later than Dec. 31!

#### **CANDIDATE STATEMENTS**

#### Jim Lynch

Jim has been a Sierra Club member for about 35 years. He currently serves as Outings Chair and Delegate to the Virginia Chapter. He formerly served as Group Treasurer. In 2005, Jim retired from NSWC Dahlgren after 41 years of service. His activities in retirement include trail work, hiking, and political

activities in retirement include trail work, niking, and political advocacy. Jim enjoys volunteering on local trail projects, at Shenandoah and Yosemite National Parks, Caledon State Park and with the Friends of the Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail. He is married to the former Martha Lucy of Fredericksburg and they have two grown daughters. Fold Here	extensively in the Sierras and formed her opinions about protecting the environment. While employed with the State of California State Institution, she established a recyling program which included an orientation and training program. She is a retired psychiatric social worker and in Spring 2009, was appointed by the Fredericksburg City Council to the Clean and Green Commission serving as Chair to the Clean Committee. Paula looks foward to working as an executive committee member of the RGSC.
Return Address:	
	Rappahannock Group of the Sierra Club
	PO Box 7972
	Fredericksburg, VA 22404
	Fold Here

**Carol Buffum** 

**Paula Chow** 

forward to serving the RGSC ExCom.

#### RSG EXCOM BALLOT

(See Candidate Statements above)

Please vote for no more than THREE candidates.

JIM LYNCH		
CAROL BUFFUM		
PAULA CHOW		
WRITE-IN		

#### If you have a joint membership, please use both columns, one for each member voting. After marking your ballot, separate page from staple and fold so that RG return address above is showing and ballot is inside. Then stamp, seal and mail. Please do not remove the mailing label or you will invalidate your ballot! To insure privacy, you may black out the name on your mailing label; however, DO NOT cross out the membership number, as we need this to validate your ballot.

Single Membership	<u>Joint Membership</u>

Rappahannock Group of the Sierra Club P.O. Box 7972 Fredericksburg, VA 22402



RG Annual Holiday Party (See Pg. 1 for Details!) EXCOM Board Election (see page 7) Non-Profit Organization US Postage Paid Fredericksburg VA 22401 PERMIT 665



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Be a sponsor for our Newsletter! See page 4 for details