



January, February and March 2017

NEWSLETTER

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



Save the Dates

March 9, 2017, from 7 to 8 PM
- Fracking Information Session,
Westmoreland Fire Dept., 52
Rectory Rd., Montross

March 11, 2017, from 10 AM to 3 PM - Sierra Club Chapter Executive Committee, Ivy Creek Natural Area, Charlottesville, VA

March 15, 2017, from 6 to 9 PM
- Westmoreland County Board of Supervisors Public Hearing - changes to Zoning Ordinances to limit fracking.

April 22, 2017 - Earth Day on the Rappahannock, at Old Mill Park in Fredericksburg, VA. Go to <http://earthdayfred.com/> for more information.

April 29, 2017 - People's Climate March, Washington, DC

Memo From the Chair

By Linda C. Muller

"They paved paradise and put up a parking lot" "Big Yellow Taxi" 1970 Joni Mitchell

"Oil wasted on the ocean and upon, our seas fish full of mercury" "Mercy Mercy Me"(The Ecology)"1971 Marvin Gaye

The Birth of an Environmental Movement and EPA

The Cuyahoga River was coated with so much garbage and industrial waste that it exploded into flames, chemicals openly dumped into rivers and lakes killed wildlife and imperiled human health, industrial smoke so thick that it choked out entire communities and blocked out the sun. This was America's environmental legacy before President Nixon and Congress stepped in and created the Environmental Protection Agency in December 1970. The 1970's saw the "birth" of the environmental movement with the first Earth Day celebrated April 22, 1970. We became exceedingly aware that in order to protect human health and life, we had to protect our air, water, and natural resources. From the 1970's came The Clean Air Act (1970) the Clean Water Act (1972) Safe Drinking Water Act (1974) Toxic Substance Control Act (1976) Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1976). Most of these federal regulations have since been updated and amended, and while not all perfect, have served as foundational building blocks for a cleaner and safer environment.

Fast forward 40+ years and we can see how other countries are struggling with unabated pollution problems. In 2008, factories near Beijing China were shut down for weeks in order to "clear the air" for the Summer Olympics and Paralympics. And according to a recently released study(2017) , India's toxic air pollution " is causing about 1.1 million people to die

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Earth Day - RGSC is one of the several organizations (or individuals) volunteering with the City of Fredericksburg Dept. of Parks & Recreation to plan the annual Earth Day on the Rappahannock every April. The planning meetings are chaired by Linda Bailey who coordinates the ever growing Earth Day event. Meetings are held once a month on a Friday at 9:00am beginning in October through April at Eileen's Cafe and Bakery on Caroline Street in Fredericksburg. Volunteers need not commit to major amounts of time, rather, whatever capacity a volunteer can serve will be helpful. If you are interested in helping out for even a few hours, contact Paula Chow at paulachow132@gmail.com and enter "Earth Day" on the subject line.

Fracking - Anyone interested in helping to educate residents of Caroline County about FRACKING, contact Paula Chow - paulachow132@gmail.com.

prematurely each year and is now surpassing China's as the deadliest in the world". Hope rests in the development and adoption of clean energy technology like solar and manufacturing processes that reduce pollution emissions. During President Obama's administration, the EPA partnered with both China and India in the development of strategies and processes to address urgent pollution issues.

EPA Now: Forward Into The Past-Shifting to State Attention

President Trump has indicated he wants to reduce EPA's footprint and significantly slash its operating budget. The new EPA administrator, Mr. Pruitt, is the former Attorney General of Oklahoma, is unabashedly supportive of the oil and gas industry and sees environmental regulation as an "impediment" to economic development. In 2015 Oklahoma experienced over 1000 earthquakes (3.0 or higher) attributable to fracking waste water injection wells. In November 2016 Oklahoma experienced a 5.0 magnitude earthquake that hit near Cushing Oklahoma. Cushing, OK is the North American trading hub for stored crude with just under 60 million barrels of stored oil. Environmentalists are rightfully concerned of the potential consequences of Mr. Pruitt's "impediment reduction" approach as head of EPA.

Should federal environmental regulations get "whittled away", it will be incumbent upon everyone to stay engaged at the state and local level. In Virginia, protecting and conserving our natural resources is a nonpartisan issue; citizens of all political stripes want clean air, water, and protected "wild" places. Remain engaged and join us for **Earth Day On the Rappahannock on EARTHDAY April 22, 2017 11 am to 4 pm at Old Mill Park.** Rain date April 29, 2017.

Yours in Exploring, Enjoying and Protecting the Planet

Linda C. Muller Chair Rappahannock Group

Link & References:

Earth Day On the Rappahannock

<http://www.visitfred.com/events/earth-day-rappahannock>

EPA Discharge Monitoring Report Database:

http://cfpub.epa.gov/dmr/ez_search.cfm

Beijing Factory Closings For Olympics

RGSC Email News Group send an email to sign-up

rappsierragroup@gmail.com

RGSC Mailing Address:

RGSC
P.O. Box 7972
Fredericksburg, VA 22404

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS/ LINKS

Virginia Conservation Network
www.vcnva.org

Virginia League of Conservation
Voters
www.valcv.org

Southern Environmental Law Center
www.southernenvironment.org

Friends of the Rappahannock
www.riverfriends.org

Tree Fredericksburg
www.treefredericksburg.org

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/07/sports/olympics/07china.html>

State of Global Air Report

<http://www.stateofglobalair.org>

"Why Oklahoma Cannot Turn Off Its Earthquakes" Bloomberg article

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-11-08/why-oklahoma-can-t-turn-off-its-earthquakes>

EPA Collaboration With China

<http://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/epa-collaboration-china>

Who is my Virginia State representative?

<http://whosmy.viriniageneralassembly.gov>

Rappahannock Group of the Sierra Club (RGSC) Conservation Chair December 2017 Update

By Bill Johnson

RGSC Local Events:

- *December 4, 2016: We held our annual Open House in Fredericksburg. It was well attended. Ms. Desirée De Haven, UMW graduate and former RGSC intern, spoke about her time as an environmental activist in Gabon where she spent a year working in conservation with Organisation Écotouristique du Lac Oguemoué (OELO).
- *February 6, 2017: We participated in a meeting with Secretary of Trade and Commerce, Todd Haymore, preparing a paper on why DMME needs to conduct a Comprehensive Review of Fracking Regulations.
- *February 14, 2017: We participated in an anti-fracking rally in Westmoreland County as a prelude to attending and speaking at a Board of Supervisors Public Hearing on proposed changes to their Comprehensive Plan to limit fracking in their County. I presented a paper titled "Fracking = Pipelines = Eminent Domain."
- *February 15, 2017: We participated in a DEQ-sponsored Public Hearing on a solid waste permit to cap-in-place Coal Ash at Possum Point. Three members of the RGSC spoke at that hearing. It was very well attended by local residents, and all (except 1)

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Interns: Kendal McGuire, Chris Meoli,
Courtney Fano, Chase Mullins, and
Maddie Reid

wanted the coal ash removed.

•March 7, 2017: We will participate in a League of Women Voters discussion session in Falls Church on fracking, to help shape their national position. We developed a paper to address the issues the LWV were to discuss.

•March 9, 2017: We will participate in a Friends of the Rappahannock/Southern Environmental Law Center fracking information session in Westmoreland County.

Student Interns: RGSC has been working with three University of Mary Washington (UMW) Ecology Club members and one the Germanna Community College Green Club member on local issues in the RGSC. The interns have been actively supporting our efforts to thwart fracking in the Taylorsville Basin.

Earth Day Festival

by **Paula Chow**

Earth Day on the Rappahannock will be celebrated on the actual Earth Day, April 22nd, 11am - 4pm at Old Mill Park, Fredericksburg. This will be the 14th annual festival organized by the City of Fredericksburg's Department of Parks and Recreation with the volunteer help of RGSC and many other organizations and individuals. We anticipate a repeat of the large attendance of 5,000 people. There will be live music during the entire festival, raffle drawings, animals, interactive displays, barrel train and pony rides, food trucks and more. As a certified Virginia Green Event, there will not be any polystyrene, plastic straws nor bottled water, and the vendors are assuring minimal waste. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottles but water will be available with non-waxed paper cups.

RGSC's booth will be located near the entrance of the festival and we plan to provide some interesting information with the theme of "Protect Our Water." The 8th annual Living Green Award will be presented on stage around 2pm.

Check the website www.earthdayfred.com for more information regarding the shuttle service, other parking options, and updates.

RGSC also participates every year in Fort A.P. Hill's Earth Day organized solely for the Caroline County schools by Fort A.P. Hill's environmental department. This year it is held on April 27th. If you love to interact with students, any RGSC member can volunteer for this event by contacting Paula Chow - paulachow132@gmail.com.

You will also see at the festival businesses that don't fit in with an Earth Day themes. They are probably sponsors which we cannot discriminate against. However, please help us with these businesses. Go to their booth and ask the representative questions like: What they are doing to help keep the environment safe and clean? What alternatives can your industry use to be less toxic? If many folks interact and ask pointed, thoughtful questions, businesses may begin to consider cleaner options and offer them to customers. That's how advocacy works.

The 8th annual Living Green Award

by Paula Chow

RGSC is calling for nominees for the Living Green Award. RGSC recognizes businesses and organizations that have taken steps and acted to help the earth and environment through **THE LIVING GREEN AWARD** presented at the Annual Earth Day on the Rappahannock festival every April.

Who is eligible? Any business or organization in Stafford, Spotsylvania, Westmoreland, Caroline, Culpeper & King George Counties and the City of Fredericksburg that has taken independent steps to help the planet through living green actions.

Who can nominate? Anyone, including the owners, employees or volunteers of a business or organization can submit a nomination. The nomination form can be found on RGSC's website.

Prior Living Green Award recipients:

2016 [Blenheim Organics Farm](#) (Westmoreland) & [Kickshaws Downtown Market](#) (Fredericksburg)

2015 [Aikido Fredericksburg](#) (Spotsylvania)

2014 [UMW Greenhouse](#) (Fredericksburg) & [Stafford Printing](#) (Stafford)

2013 [Marstel Day](#) (Fredericksburg) & [Walnut Hill Farms](#) ((Falmouth)

2012 [Harvest Market](#) (Spotsylvania)

2011 [Bistro Bethem](#) (Fredericksburg) & [Foode](#) (Fredericksburg)

2010 [Ten Thousand Villages](#) (Spotsylvania but now closed) & [Hyperion Espresso](#) (Fredericksburg)

TIP COLUMN:

Beauty Products: Are you trying to go nontoxic with your beauty products? You can start with making your own lotion. Organic virgin coconut oil can be purchased rather cheaply at many stores. Put one cup of softened or grated (not melted) coconut oil and 1 tsp. of tea tree oil or vitamin E oil (both optional) in the bowl of a mixer (Kitchen Aid is ideal) or a blender. Beat on high for 7 minutes. This will produce a "butter." Put in a jar for storage at room temperature. Use a tiny bit and rub on skin. At first, you will be using too much which will make your skin feel too oily. Rub this in and spread it around, and next time, use much less. When you become used to this "oily" feel, you will become addicted to its result. There is a lot of good evidence of coconut oil's benefits.

Organic Gardening: It is time to start planning your garden. Love eggplant, but don't get much yield because flea beetles turn eggplant leaves into a lacy mess? If you start your own seeds, consider planting them directly into large containers, not the tiny seed starters. If you buy the seedlings, as soon as you get them, replant them into larger containers. It does take up a lot more space to do so, but it reduces shocking the plants. If you use large enough pots, you may be able to keep them as container plants.

So how do you minimize flea beetle damage? Large pots allow you to keep the plants in the pots later into the season. Flea beetles move along the ground, so put the pots on a platform about 3 feet above the ground. I use a couple of sawhorses and an old wooden pallet. When the plants have a good quantity of leaves and some flowers, replant them directly into the soil. Keeping the plants high off the ground means the flea beetles can't jump or climb onto the plants. Flea beetles will still attack those replanted eggplants, but the plant should be strong enough to handle the damage. Spray some well diluted organic soapy water on the plants when you see the leaves begin to look like lace. Google organic soap pesticide for some recipes.

Fitted Sheet - Garbage or Salvage? Don't you hate when your fitted sheet loses elasticity? Instead of purchasing a new one and discarding the old, repair it. It's simple and inexpensive. Replacement elastic costs less than \$5 from any fabric store. Use a seam ripper to make a 1 or 2 inch opening in the elastic casing on one side of the sheet. Cut the old elastic and pull it out. Measure the length and width of your bed, double it, then subtract 25%. Don't cut the elastic until the very end, just in case your measurements are off. Measure the elastic and place a large safety pin at the end of the length you just calculated.

Take a safety pin the same width as the elastic and stick it into the beginning end of the elastic. Then tread it through the casing where the old elastic was. When you get to the large pin you don't want to put any more elastic into the casing, but finish feeding the small safety pin through until it is back at the opening. Spread the elastic throughout the sheet making it even all around. Place the sheet on the bed to make sure the sheet is fitted enough. If it is too loose then pull the elastic tighter, if it is too tight then feed more elastic through the casing. When you are sure that the fit is what you need, sew the elastic together. Cut the extra elastic after you are finished. Sew the sheet where you opened it up either by hand or with a sewing machine. There, new sheet for under \$5.

National Sierra Club Elections are Underway - VOTE!

Those eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election will receive your national Sierra Club ballot in early March in the mail or by Internet if you chose that option. Your participation is critical for a strong Sierra Club.

How can I learn about the candidates? Each candidate provides a statement about themselves and their views on the issues on the official election ballot. You can learn more by asking questions of your group and chapter leadership and other experienced members you know. You can also visit the Club's election web site for additional information about candidates: <http://www.sierraclub.org/board/election>. Then make your choice and cast your vote! Online voting is quick and easy!

Can I vote via the Internet even if I receive a ballot via mail? Yes! Use the link above. If you vote via regular mail, your ballots must be received by April 26, 2017

RGSC Interns

Maddie Reid: Currently I am working on planning a sustainability job and internship fair at UMW through the Ecology Club. With the Ecology Club, I am also helping to plan out ways to make UMW a more bee friendly campus. I've also been doing some research into local fracking

issues, with the help of my Sierra Club supervisors, Bill Johnson and Paula Chow. With this information, I've been writing LTE's to Virginia based newspapers, being published in the Roanoke Times. Most recently I've been writing letters to the board of supervisors in Westmoreland County sharing my discontent with the proposed fracking there.

Chase Mullins: Some things I have done during my internship include: attending rallies to protest fracking, writing letters to newspapers, attending lectures with my fellow interns, and writing a petition with the other interns and gathering 100+ signatures. This semester I hope to finish my short documentary about clean water and fracking in Virginia with my fellow intern Courtney. I plan to continue writing letters to newspapers and encouraging others to do the same. I want to inspire my friends, family and classmates to become involved. I am trying to get my school to let me show a documentary about fracking and then host a discussion afterwards. I am attending the climate march in April.

Christian Meoli: This semester I will be working diligently to fight fracking and pipelines in the area by bringing awareness to the issue through letters to the editors and op-eds in local newspapers. On campus, I am working with other students eco representatives to establish a sustainability fund at UMW which would fund the purchase of renewable energy, the implementation of sustainable initiatives on campus, and environmental research projects. Currently, we are in the middle of RecycleMania which is an eight week long recycling competition between colleges. I have been working on educating students through tabling on campus. Finally, my sub-group in Ecology Club will be filming a short video to show students how to properly recycle at dining locations on campus. It is going to be a busy and successful semester!