

News & Activities of the Falls of the James Chapter, Sierra Club

# Falls of the James Group's Annual Holiday GALA & Special Ralph White Retirement Celebration! at the Science Museum Wednesday, December 5th, 2012 6:30 - 9:00 pm!

In 1980, the Falls of the James Group brought Ralph White to Richmond to be the City's Naturalist and to head the James River Park System. In thirty-two years, Ralph has transformed the modest collection of City riverfront Parks into a system linked by trails, interpretation guides, recreation activities of all modes and means, assisted by the Friends of James River park and other committed environmentalists, outdoor recreationists, dedicated volunteers, sympathetic property owners, City staff, and others who share his vision. AND Ralph's most valuable supporter and sympathizer, his wonderful wife Cricket!

Ralph was awarded the National Sierra Club's **Distinguished Service Award** in San Francisco in 2006, which honors persons in public service for strong and consistent commitment to conservation over a long period of time, and in October of this year was awarded the Valentine History Museum's History-Makers award for **Promoting Stronger Communities**.

As Ralph's retirement in early January 2013 draws near, we will celebrate Ralph and the success of the James River Park System; his vision, his many valuable accomplishments, our friendships and fond memories, and wish him the very best in his well-earned retirement.

The evening's main event is centered around Ralph White. Most of you are familiar with Ralph's gift for storytelling and you won't want to miss his remarks as he shares some of his memories.



Ralph White courtesy of The Valentine Museum

As in previous years, we will have a grand evening of holiday music, great food from A Sharper Palate (veggie- and carnibuffet with side dishes and more), refreshments, socializing and Sierra Club gift shopping for the holidays. We will also present the 6th annual FOJG Green Giant Award, recognizing a Richmond-area individual making contributions to exemplary environmental stewardship and education.

Admission for SC members is \$30 and the cost for non-members is \$35. Be a VIP and sponsor a table for 8 for \$300 - you'll get reserved seats, extra credit and a tax-deduction! Reservations AND payments MUST be made in advance! Remember that seating in the RF&P Room will be limited to 100, so the first 100 people who make their payments are guaranteed to have a seat there. Payments may be made in two ways: 1: send your check (made out to "Sierra Club") to Anne Repp, 2221 Monument Ave Richmond, VA 23220 by Noon Mon Dec 3rd. (FYI, her phone is 355-3804 and email is anne.repp@verizon.net 2: To pay by credit card, order tickets via Eventbrite: <a href="http://celebrateralph.eventbrite.com/">http://celebrateralph.eventbrite.com/</a> Deadline also Noon Mon Dec 3rd. Members and guests please bring: Hors-d'ouvres if your last name begins with a: A-L; M-Z please bring a dessert. Bring your own glass or mug if you can...

*NOTE:* Volunteers are needed to help the night of the event. Carol Pontius and Alice Preston are in charge of decorations, and they will need your help to transform the room (pls show up at 4:30-5pm). Greeters, bartenders, sales people, registration folks, and cleanup volunteers are also needed. Please let Anne know you'd like to volunteer! Pitch in and make it light work.

Keep in mind that we're also trying to raise some funds, but we've done away with the Auctions (silent and voice) this year, to reduce chaos and confusion. Instead, we're selling the usual SC goodies: t-shirts, calendars and coolers, mugs and fair-trade coffee, and discounted memberships for your family and friends. Reduce your carbon footprint and do all your shopping with us that night. We will also have a raffle box, with drawing prizes being gifts and services from many of our usual supporters. Festive holiday aftire is encouraged, so lets "deck the halls....

# Attention, Falls of the James Group Membership!

Starting in January, we are moving our meeting place and regular meeting day to the Jepson Alumni Center on the U of R Campus, on each THIRD Wednesday!

Please see map and directions on page 6

# January 2013 Program at the Jepson

Wednesday, January 16th - 7 pm. Reclaiming Our Food - new ways to provide local food for communities Tanya Denckla Cobb

# February 2013 Program

February 20th - 7 pm Australian Parks and Amazing Discoveries *Plus* Legislative Update

# March 2013 Program

March 20th - 7 pm
The Blueprint to Save the Bay,
Starting in Our Backyard Ann Jurczyk,
Chesapeake Bay Foundation

### **April 2013 Program**

April 17 - 7 pm Large Scale Commercial and Industrial Solar Thermal Projects -Stefan Bogdanovic

### Celebrate

the end of the BYS and Thank All Volunteers Night Wednesday, May 22nd, 6:30 pm.

June 2013 Program and Date To Be Announced...

Meet in a place like Capital Ale...

<u>"Reclaiming Our Food"</u> is the new book by Tanya Denckla Cobb, the Associate Director of UVa's Institute for Environmental Negotiation (in the Urban & Environmental Planning Department). It tells how the grassroots food movement is changing what we eat and tells the stories of more

Ralph and Cricket White traveled to Australia in the Fall, and Ralph visited a number of national parks near Melbourne and along the southern coast, which included ocean edge, estuaries and mountain ecosystems - mind-blowing flora and fauna; their nation's different approach to conservation and interpretation; and their remarkable social

Is the Chesapeake Bay getting healthier? What efforts are underway to restore it at the Federal, state and local levels? What steps can individuals take, starting in our backyards, to improve the health of Virginia's waters?

Ann Jurczyk, Outreach and Advocacy Manager for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation will cover these topics in depth, including

The presentation will examine large, state of the art commercial and industrial solar thermal projects -such as the Pepsi/Gatorade industrial processing heat project, and the world's largest district heading/cooling project at Mountainside Middle School-Desert Mountain High School in Arizona (50,000 square feet) and other international

Celebrate the completion of the U of R Big Yard Sale and thank the wonderful volunteers who make it so successful. We'll have an easy evening of music, good food and fellowship (as we did in June last year).

Meet in a place like Capital Ale House or the Cine Bistro and watch a bio-film on John Muir. Add beer and/or wine in moderation, and some good pub-grub, and than 50 groups across North America who are finding newways to provide local food for their communities. Tanya is a great speaker - you won't want to miss this lecture! Please see story on Pg 4 for more information on the book.

transformation, in only a decade or two, to openness and all-inclusiveness. Plus their marvelous photography!

Also, State SC Director Glen Besa will provide our annual briefing on the General Assembly, with a special focus on the environmental bills we support and the legislation we oppose.

how the "Blueprint" - the combination of EPA established limits for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment plus Virginia's watershed implementation plan - should restore the Bay to once again be a thriving estuary. In addition, Ann will talk about CBF's efforts to restore the Upham Brook watershed, funded in part by a National Fish and Wildlife Grant.

projects. Stefan will also focus on regional developments options in Virginia and North Carolina, discuss US tax credits and innovative financing and tax credit models. Not highly technical, with lots of photos. A FoJG member whom many of you know, Stefan Bogdanovic is a FoJG member who attends our general meetings regularly

Location, time and pot luck assignments in the next newsletter). We may encourage you to bring (or wear) the most unusual thing you found at the BYS, so let's plan on having some early "summer fun".

discuss film afterwards. Anybody else have other suggestions?

# Other Important Dates:

Easter Sunday, March 31st - Monument Ave Festival and Promenade. We usually set up a tabling booth with the State Chapter office and do petitions, photo ops with Bigfoot and the wind turbine, from Noon to 5:30. Volunteers needed.

**Saturday, April 20th** - Earth Day Celebration in Old Manchester. Environmental exhibitions; art and children's activities; food, beer and music; a fun run, James River Fish Fest activities, bike and ped tours, and more. We will probably set up a tabling booth with the State Chapter office, and its a fun day. Volunteers needed too!

Monday, May 13 to Saturday, May 18th - "Big Yard Sale" at U of R officially begins - see story on pg 6 for more info... Page 2

# Third Annual RVA Environmental Film Festival February 9th & 10th, 2013 at the Historic Byrd Theatre in Carytown! by Tamara Smith

Now is the time to make your plans to attend the 2013 RVA EFF. FOJG has partnered with the Capital Region Land Conservancy, the James River Green Building Council, the Enrichmond Foundation, and the Byrd Theatre to bring the third annual RVA EFF to Richmond area residents.

Representatives of these main environmental groups are starting to fundraise, select films, arrange publicity and organize volunteers for the weekend event. Expect to see more information about the production in the FOJG website and in Facebook updates in coming months. Feel free to contact Tamara Smith or John Zeugner to help with programming, publicity and ticket distribution, and/or volunteering. Passes to the festival will be available at the FOJG December Dinner celebration as well as the January general meeting.

Suggested films include: The Age of Stupid, Forks over Knives, Dying Green,

Radioactive Wolves, Revenge of the Electric Car, Switch, Tsunami and the Cherry Blossom, Vegucated, Waking the Green Tiger, Chasing Ice, Atomic States of America, Green Fire ( the life of Also Leopold), Chronicles from the Heartland, Dust Bowl, Chasing Ice, End of Suburbia, Sourlands, etc. Let us know quickly if you have an outstanding film that should be viewed. Our mission "to raise awareness of issues of environmental concern affecting our planet and to inspire activism"

# Memory and Tribute Book for Ralph White by Catherine Welsh

If you have a special memory involving Ralph White or you are one of his many fans, this is your chance to put it in writing. We will collect these memories or tributes and include them in a binder for Ralph to read during his upcoming retirement. These can be creative,

heart-felt, funny, poignant or personal. You could write a letter, a song lyric, draw a picture or a cartoon or a caricature, illustrate a story, include a photograph — whatever floats your boat and honors Ralph. Please send your contributions to Catherine Welsh, 3610 S. Belmont Rd.,

Richmond VA 23234 or attach them to an email to welshcm@msn.com. Take a little time to let Ralph know he and his work for the James River Park and Richmond have truly touched many of our lives.

# View from the Chair by Adele Maclean

### FOJG Grants Support Two Worthy Organizations

What a great feeling! Because FOJG's champion Big Yard Sale fundraising team had a banner year in 2012, our group is in the enviable position of having money to share with partner organizations to strengthen the grassroots of our region.

In June, the FOJG Executive Committee (Ex Com) approved a grant request of \$2,500 from the Partnership for Smarter Growth (PSG) and a request of \$1,000 from FairShare Urban Farms (FSUF).

PSG is an area nonprofit organization whose focus is improving quality of life in greater Richmond by guiding how and where the region grows. The organization accomplishes its mission by educating the public and public officials throughout the area about the costs and benefits of various land use and transportation options and by engaging all sectors within the region to work together to make sound choices for our common future. PSG is using the FOJG grant to support

its Healthy Community Choices program, which offers workshops and walking tours to engage citizens and leaders in exploring how communities can best meet current and future needs by approaching development thoughtfully, for example, by considering the health and environmental benefits of including walkable and bikable options as well as open green space.

FSUF is a Richmond-based nonprofit that works with vulnerable neighborhoods to develop self-reliant, sustainable ways to access, produce, prepare, preserve, and share healthy nutritious food. FSUF has developed a hands-on gardening and experiential learning program for the E.S.H. Greene Elementary School and its predominantly low-income Hispanic and African American neighborhood in south Richmond and is currently exploring the possibility of expanding into other area neighborhoods, schools, and parks in the near future.

FSUF is applying its grant to pay the Growing Greene program coordinator, who

oversees the gardening program at the Greene School and is currently implementing the second phase of a multi-year gardening program for students at the school.



The FOJG Ex Com is also open to considering requests from other grassroots organizations aligned with our mission. To request funds for a project or organization you support, contact any member of the Ex Com for a grant request form and general guidelines. In addition, watch our website for further information. We encourage you to tell us about the grassroots programs and organizations that you think merit our consideration for additional funding.

### More on Tanya Denckla Cobb and Her New Book

Is the grassroots food movement here to stay? Is it making a real difference or a just a faddish flash in the pan? What is holding the food movement together, if anything? What can we learn from the food movement?

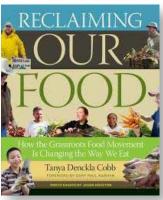
When she began working on her latest book, *Reclaiming Our Food*, Tanya Denckla Cobb didn't know the answers to these questions. But through her research and first-hand interviews with leaders and staff from more than 50 food projects across the United States, she identified common shared motivations, values and trends.

Join Tanya Denckla Cobb for a fresh and inspiring perspective on how food is serving as a catalyst for change. While sharing stories and examples from different food projects, she will describe the three ways that food is bringing about profound changes toward a more sustainable world. A pragmatist at heart, and a seasoned environmental mediator who is long accustomed to entertaining multiple truths, Denckla Cobb will focus on the practical and real as opposed to the polemic and elusive. Be ready to be challenged: after offering her findings, she will facilitate a lively discussion about the future of our food system, so bring your own ideas and questions.

Reclaiming Our Food, Denckla Cobb's latest book, was awarded the Nautilus 2012 Gold Award for Green Living, and also named by Booklist in 2012 as one of the top ten books on the environment. Where others have made the case for the local food movement, Reclaiming Our Food is a practical guide for how communities are actually making it happen. In this book, Tanya

Denckla Cobb offers inspiration as well as a wealth of lessons learned and practical advice.

Photographic essays of 11 community food projects, by acclaimed photographer Jason Houston, detail the unusual work of these projects and bring them to life in unforgettable images. To learn more, visit www. tanyadencklacobb.com



# A Beginner's Shopping Guide to Organics by Catherine Welsh

If you want to know anything about organics go to website for the Organic Center http://www.organic-center.org/, a research and education organization in Troy, Oregon. They have a wealth of information and an on-line newsletter to which you can subscribe. One of their publications lists the conventionally US grown and imported fruits and vegetables with the highest DRI (Dietary Risk Index which measures pesticide residue levels, toxicity levels of these pesticides, and the frequency of their appearance in samples). So if you are

trying to decide where to spend your organic buying dollars consider these findings:

**Domestic** conventionally grown fruits and vegetables that pose the greatest risk for toxic pesticide exposure:

Apples, Celery, Cantaloupe, Cucumbers, Cherries, Green beans, Cranberries, Lettuce, Nectarines, Peas, Peaches, Potatoes, Pears, Sweet bell peppers, Strawberries, Tomatoes **Imported\*** conventionally grown fruits and vegetables that pose the greatest risk for toxic pesticide exposure:

Apples, Broccoli, Cantaloupe, Carrots, Cherries, Celery, Grapes, Cucumbers, Nectarines, Green beans, Peaches, Lettuce, Pears, Peas, Strawberries, Sweet bell peppers, Tomatoes

\*Consumers are exposed to these mostly from December through April.

# What to do with all those leaves? by Catherine Welsh

Mulch the leaves back into the turf. Using either a mulching mower or a standard rotary mower you can dispose of leaves without bagging, vacuuming, blowing or raking to the curb. This also helps to improve the turf-growing conditions of your yard. Some things to remember: remove sticks and twigs before mowing leaves, mow moist not wet or dry leaves, keep mower air filter clean and blade sharp, wear safety goggles and an air mask. It might take

several passes with the mower before all leaves are chopped small enough, depending on the amount of your yard's leaf coverage. Pine needles do not break down as easily as leaves but they are the perfect mulch for shrubs so rake up your needles and treat your shrubs to a sweet bed of pine. (adapted from the Va Cooperative Extension pub. 430-521 "Leave" Them Alone: Lawn Leaf Management)

# Perennial Plant Exchange by Catherine Welsh

We had a great 1st plant exchange in the Science Museum parking lot before the program meeting on October 10th. Some of the plants traded included bearded iris, Louisiana iris, Japanese iris, obedient plant, gladioli corms, mahonias, columbine, loosestrife, rubeckia seeds, and fireworks goldenrod. We also had some houseplants which found welcome homes. We are planning on another plant exchange in the Spring of 2013 so think about what you would like to share and join us next time.

Paae 4

# 2013 Sierra Club Calendars NOW Available

by Tamara Smith,

Sierra Club Calendars, front to back, contain photographs taken by award winning photographers of wilderness untouched by civilization. Human footprints, utility lines, or evidence of man's impact on nature will not be found here, but instead breathtakingly beautiful scenes and photos of mother

nature at her best.

Falls of the James Group has limited supply of these acclaimed calendars for sale, in different sizes: Engagement (desk sized) for \$14; Wall Calendars for \$13. In addition to being a source of fundraising for FOJG, calendars make terrific holiday or occasional

gifts while conveying your appreciation of nature.

Quantity discounts apply, but hurry! Contact Tamara Smith, tamsmith 47@ gmail.com or send your check plus \$2.50 per calendar for shipping to Tamara Smith, 5314 Dorchester Rd., Richmond VA 23225.

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# "Big Yard Sale" coming up in spring 2013

Mark your 2013 Sierra Club calendar for the week of Monday, May 13 through Saturday, May 18th, when FOJG members, friends and family will once again engage in the ultimate recycling event on the U of R campus. We will have more information and sign-up sheets beginning in April, so stay tuned in!

We will be ramping up collections during the several weekends prior to Graduation weekend (May 12th) and will need a couple of crews to cruise the campus collecting the early discards - John Z is in charge of this (288-5005)

However, we will need as many volunteers as possible (at least 100 volunteers!) on Monday, May 13th, the day when most graduated

seniors move out of their campus apartments and leave thousands of pounds of clothes, electronics, furniture and supplies behind! These goods are salvaged by our FoJG scavenging teams for resale, instead of spending eternity in a landfill.

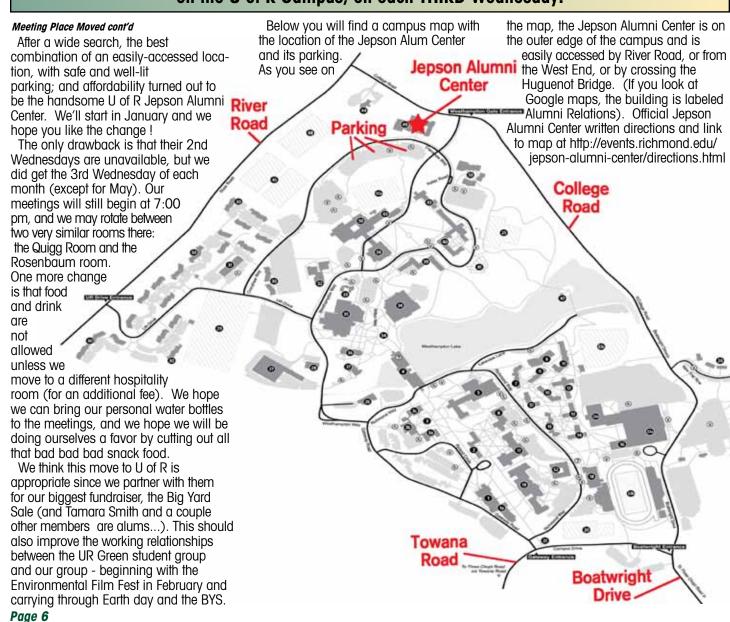
The useful, the unusual, the treasures and the inexplicables are collected, with the University's support, and sorted in the Milhauser Gym. The "Preview" sale is on Friday, May 17th, (open only to U of R faculty and staff.) and Saturday, May 18 is the big public sale.

Proceeds from the 2012 sale reached a record high, because so many FoJG volunteers helped with collecting, sorting, sales, and transportation and moving

support for the event's success. Watch for future announcements and sign up opportunities in the Spring newsletter and on the website of Falls of the James Group, Sierra Club.



# FoJG General Membership Meetings Move to the Jepson Alumni Center on the U of R Campus, on each THIRD Wednesday!



### Election of Executive Committee Delegates for 2013-2014

The 2-year terms of 5 Falls of the James Group Executive Committee Members (aka Delegates) expire in December 2012. Each Group's Executive Committee (or Ex Comm) should have 9 members, and we do have 2 vacancies this year. (Note that Tamara Smith is stepping down but Wendy Floyd is stepping up, and that that Adele MacLean and Eric Vrabel are in the 2012-2013 terms). *Please vote for at least 5, and write-ins are encouraged.* 

THIS OFFICIAL ELECTION BALLOT			
contains your membership label on the back.			
Vote the left column for single membership or use both columns for joint membership (if two names appear on your label). Vote for up to five delegates and two possible write in candidates. More than seven votes will invalidate the ballot. You may ink out the name and mailing address on the reverse of the ballot, but PLEASE do not ink out or remove the mailing label with your membership number. Only current FoJG members may vote.    Mail the ballot to:   Elections Committee;   P. O. Box 25201,   Richmond VA 23260			
This must be postmarked NO LATER THAN December 30th, 2012.			
The Ex-Com Elections Committee will count the votes and confirm the election results.			
The elected Ex-Comm Delegates will be introduced at our January 2012 General Meeting. Thank you for your participation!			
Group Delegate Elections			
Scott Burger			
Wendy Floyd			
Mary Beth Mains			
Catherine Welsh			
John Zeugner			
Write in Candidate			
Write in Candidate			
The Ex-Com Elections Committee will count the votes and confirm the election results.			
The elected Ex-Comm Delegates will be introduced at our January 2012 General Meeting. Thank you for your participation!			

### Brief Biographical sketches:

**Scott Burger** has been an Ex Comm member since 2006. He is also President of the Oregon Hill Neighborhood Association, serves on the Board of the Oregon Hill Home improvement Council, serves on the Board of Citizens To Stop Nuclear Terror, and is the acting Chairperson of the Richmond Green Party.

Wendy Floyd -My appreciation of nature and the environment began at an early age. Our family vacations were spent camping north to Canada and south to the tip of Florida. My father was an environmentalist before that term was "cool" and he instilled in me a lasting love for mother earth. Since joining the Falls of the James Sierra Club, I am an active member of the Conservation Committee which planned and implemented the Recycling Break Through contest, have participated in the Great Big Yard Sale at the University of Richmond, and volunteered for the phone banks at the VA Chapter of the Sierra Club. It would be an honor to serve this organization as an Executive Committee member.

Mary Beth Mains - I am an outdoor enthusiast who originally hails from Southwestern Pennsylvania. I moved to Richmond to be nearer to family 18 years ago. I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 2006 and about that time I also joined the Friends of Bryan Park. Educating others about recycling and cleaning up the environment is part of my own personal mission statement. Now if I could just figure out how to make a living at that versus doing accounting, I would be really happy!

**Catherine Welsh**, Southside Richmond - Please consider electing me to serve on the executive committee for the FOJG Sierra Club. I agree with the philosophy of the Sierra Club that preservation, protection and enjoyment of our natural world is a citizen's right and responsibility; I also believe it to be a personal and spiritual necessity and commitment.

I have been a FOJG member since 1994 and served on ex-com and as social chair for a number of years. I am recently retired after 33 years as a Chesterfield County public school librarian. I would like to dedicate some of my new found free time to environmental issues and education by working with and for our FOJG Sierra Club.

**John Zeugner** - I'm a city planner, working in the fields of environment, smart growth, transportation & urban design. I joined FoJG in 1994; was elected to Ex Comm in 1996, chaired the Programs committee since 1998, was elected Vice Chair in 2002, Chair from 2007-2010, and am now Vice Chair and Newsletter Czar. I'm currently working on water quality & quantity issues, Conservation Easements, and with several environmental groups. I would be honored to continue to serve the Group and the environmental community of the Richmond region.

Sierra Club Falls of the James Group P.O. Box 25201 Richmond, VA 23250 www.virginia.sierraclub.org/foj

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Starting in January 2013, General Membership Meeting
Third Wednesday Each Month, Jepson Alumni Center - 7 pm.
Free & Public Invited to Attend - For more info, see our website:

http://virginia.sierraclub.org/FOJ

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# Falls of the James Group Delegates & Current Executive Committee Officers:

 Chairs
 Adele MacLean
 amaclean94@gmail.com

 Vice Chair
 John Zeugner
 jjzeugner@comcast.net

 Secretary #1
 Eric Vrabel
 evrabel@yahoo.com

 Secretary #2
 Catherine Welsh
 welshcm@msn.com

 Treasurer
 Mary Beth Mains
 marybeth125@verison.net

### Group Delegates Elected by Membership (Ex Comm)

Scott Burger 714-5444 EXPIRES Dec 12 EXPIRES Dec 13 Adele MacLean 282-8637 Tamara Smith 562-2500 EXPIRES Dec 12 John Zeugner 288-5005 EXPIRES Dec 12 Catherine Welsh 745-1512 EXPIRES Dec 12 Mary Beth Mains 212-6897 **EXPIRES Dec 12** 571-244-1078 Eric Vrabel EXPIRES Dec 13

The Executive Committee meets usually the 1st Wed, Sept-May 7:00 pm SC VA Chapt Off 422 E Franklin St, Suite 302

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Letters and your comments are welcome. Please use the contact information listed above.

Advertising now being accepted for future Fall Lines .... Have a business that is environmentally responsible or beneficial? Have a service of interest to our 1,550 members? Please contact John Z at jizeugner@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor: John J Zeugner, AICP 804-288-5005

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□ 524

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