

September 2013 - December 2013



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

Falls of the James Group supports attendance at Annual Virginia State Gathering

In order to encourage our membership to learn more about issues, get more involved, and get out in nature, the FOJ EXCOM has elected to offer reimbursement for up to six FOJ members for 1/2 their registration fee at the Virginia State Chapter Fall Gathering to be held Sept 20-22 at Caroline Furnace Camp in the heart of George Washington National Forest. Please consult your latest copy of The Old Dominion Sierran for registration information.

The two night weekend features nature hikes, Virginia Sierra Club issues, good music, great food and fellowship with other Sierrans. Please alert Tamara Smith at tamsmith47@gmail.com if you plan to attend and are requesting one half registration cost (up to \$49) by FOJ. This will be in the form of a reimbursement after attendance and it is on a first come, first serve basis. Transportation is your responsibility, carpools may be coordinated through the State Chapter.



**Save the Date: Wednesday, December 11th, 6:30 pm ! Falls of the James Group's
Annual Holiday Gala and Fundraiser, with guest speaker Ben Greenberg, Nature Photographer
and author of *Natural Virginia* (publishing date March 2014).**

Please see Inside story for information about Ben Greenberg and his upcoming book on page 3.

Be sure to reserve the evening of Wednesday, December 11th, to attend the FOJG Sierra Club annual Holiday Gala Celebration to be held at the Science Museum of Virginia, located at 2500 W. Broad Street, in the RF&P room. Deja Vu?

What would the Holidays be without the Gala at the SMVA? We will have a grand evening of holiday music, great food from A Sharper Palate (veggie- and carni- buffet with side dishes and more), refreshments, socializing and Sierra Club gift shopping. We will also present the 7th annual FOJG Green Giant Award, recognizing a Richmond-area individual making contributions to exemplary environmental stewardship and education.

Members please bring: if your last name begins with a: A-L, please bring an Hors-d'ouvres If your last name begins with: M-Z please bring a dessert. Bring your own glass or mug if you can remember!

NOTE: Volunteers are needed to help with 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 around 4 pm). Greeters, bartenders, sales people, registration folks, and cleanup volunteers are also needed. Wendy Floyd will be coordinating volunteers - please see her article on page 3. Pitch in and make it light work!

Keep in mind that we are trying to raise 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, drawing prizes of gifts and services from many of our usual supporters.

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 & email is anne.repp@verizon.net ; **2:** To pay by credit card, order tickets via Eventbrite: <http://holidaygala2013.eventbrite.com>. Deadline also Noon Monday, December 3rd.

Festive holiday attire is encouraged, so lets "deck the halls...."

We'll Recycle What Your Recycler Won't !! Don't forget to bring your old batteries, CFC bulbs, #5 plastics, cell phones, and other hard-to-recycle goods.

FoJG Fall General Meeting Programs

Attention, Falls of the James Group Membership and visitors !

**Our General Membership meetings are in the Jepson Alumni Center on the U of R Campus, on each THIRD Wednesday!
Go to <http://events.richmond.edu/jepson-alumni-center/> for a map and directions.**

September 2013 Program

Wednesday, Sept. 18 - 7 pm.

"James River Parks, Chapter TWO !"

Nathan Burrell - *James River Park Superintendent*

Nathan Burrell was recently appointed Park Superintendent of James River Park System. As the system's Trail Manager he had already helped develop trails to link the parks to schools greenways, shopping centers and other community facilities. Named one of Style Weekly's "40 Under 40," Nathan will discuss current trends and future developments in a park system recognized by both Trail Runner and Blue Ridge Outdoors magazines.



October 2013 Program

Wednesday, Oct. 16 - 7 pm.

Area Universities Report on Past & Future Environmental Projects

Students from 3 universities will be discussing their recent green activities and accomplishments—on & off campus—as well as projects planned for the upcoming school year. Highlights from last year's projects include:

- tree plantings
- seed library

- community gardens
- adopt-a-block cleanups
- e-cycling collections
- rainwater irrigation

Please join us to meet these young environmentalists to preview the green projects planned for their campuses and neighboring communities in the school year ahead.

FoJG Sierra Club Fall Plant Exchange October 16th - 5:30-6:45 pm

FALL IS FOR PLANTING!!!

With a wet Spring and wetter early Summer we all have a bounty of ornamentals. If you find you have too many of some perennial plants and want to try growing some new things then bring your extras to the FOJG plant exchange. Easy enough – bring a plant take a plant, bring 5 plants take 5 plants, etc. If you have nothing to trade, come anyway because there are always extras for new gardeners and homeowners.

We will do the tailgate exchange in the parking lot at the Jepson Alumni Center from 5:30 to 6:45. (NO plants in the building, please!) Please pot or bag each plant separately for ease of exchange. It would be nice if you could label plants with common name, light requirements and blooming time but this is not necessary.

Questions?

Contact: Catherine Welsh 745-1512
catherine.welsh@verizon.net



November 2013 Program

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 7:00 pm.

Double Program

News on the 2015 Cycling World Championships in Richmond,

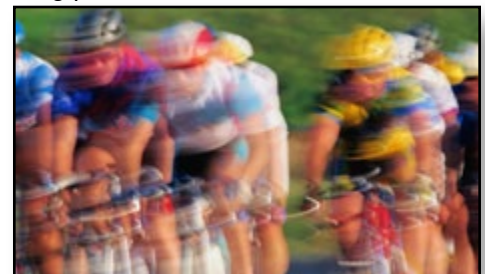
with Lee Kallman, *Director of Marketing and Communications with Richmond 2015;* and

Update on The Virginia Capital Trail by Beth Weisbrod, *Executive Director, Virginia Capital Trail Foundation.*

The Road World Cycling Championships is bicycle racing's pinnacle event, held annually in an international city as chosen by the UCI, the sport's governing body. Come hear how Richmond will be gearing up for 2015 and one of the world's greatest sporting events, with a global television audience of more than 300 million spectators.

Also, Beth will provide a progress report on the Virginia Capital Trail - a 50 mile plus dedicated, paved pedestrian and bicycle trail that will connect the Commonwealth's past and present capitals of Jamestown and Richmond along the scenic Route 5 corridor.

Will the Foundation's fundraising plans and construction schedule enable the "Cap to Cap Trail" to be completed by 2015? If you want to help make a wonderful dream come true, bring your checkbooks !



Holiday Gala Guest Speaker Ben Greenberg Nature Photographer and author of *Natural Virginia*

Ben is a native Virginian, who grew up in Richmond and now lives in Charlottesville. His passion for nature photography began in the 1970s, and he has been a freelance professional photographer and artist for 40-plus years. His carefully crafted landscape photographs have won local and national awards including the International Grand Prize for the KINSA photography contest.

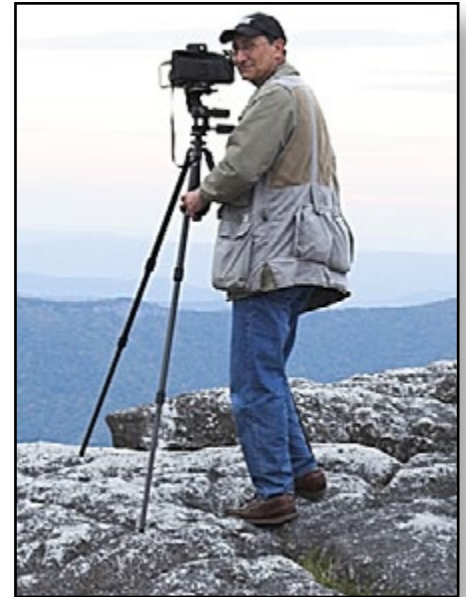
Ben takes great pride in creating photographic images of the highest quality in color and black and white. He uses the best of traditional and cutting edge technology, film and digital, seeking to capture photographs that provide the discriminating viewer with an image that portrays all the natural beauty of the subject.

Ben's primary subjects are the scenic vistas of mountains, landscapes, rivers, lakes and shorelines of Virginia and the nation. These locations include the University of Virginia and surrounding areas, the James River, the Blue Ridge Parkway and Shenandoah National Park, Great Smokey Mountains National Park, Tangier Island and the Eastern Shore, Southwest Virginia and the Outer Banks.

He is currently working on a book called *Natural Virginia* which will be distributed by UVA Press and it will be available to the public in March 2014. He says of the book "Virginia is a state of remarkable diversity from the Eastern Shore and the Chesapeake Bay to the Blue Ridge Mountains, from the highlands of Southwest Virginia to Great Falls on the Potomac River. Like other natural environments it is facing serious threats to its beauty and well-being from the byproducts of the 21st century and the state's expanding population and economy. *Natural Virginia*, a coffee table size book (10"x17"), celebrates that varied and breathtaking scenery with more than 100 dramatic panoramic landscape photographs from every corner of the Commonwealth. *Natural Virginia* is dedicated to all who take pleasure in experiencing first hand the state's scenic locations. It also actively supports dedicated state organizations committed to preserving Virginia's fragile environment for the enjoyment of our future generations.

Ben says he is excited about the opportunity to share his passion for

nature photography with a room full of environmentalists, and connect the book to the environmental community." It is important to celebrate the diversity and natural beauty of Virginia and ensure its protection and preservation."



Ben Greenberg at Dolly Sods
shot by Richard Jacobs

A Message from the Volunteer Chair by Wendy Floyd (and John Zeugner)

Thank you to all the volunteers that have contributed their time and talents to the many events this year that have made our FoJG outreach and activism so successful.

The Big Yard Sale broke the previous year's record, for reasons we described in the BYS article. However, this year we attracted only about 80 volunteers, compared to the previous year's 100 volunteers. Despite having 20 some fewer volunteers, many in our group spent extra time and effort collecting the "stuff" (dumpster diving, intercepting the students' discards, sorting and organizing the items late into Monday and Tuesday evenings, and helping to clean up the Gym for another day or two after the Saturday sale (despite their exhaustion)! A huge thank you to everyone that spent extra hours, extra strength, and extra perseverance to make this year's BYS fundraising event a huge success!

On a cold, rainy Easter Day our members partnered with the Virginia Sierra Club at the Easter Parade on Monument Ave to meet people in our community and to get the word out about the important issues

in our State.

In April we were at Earth Day at the Farmer's Market in Shockoe Bottom. It was a community, family friendly event with interactive information about improving home energy efficiency, hands on activities for children, eco-friendly cars, and local farms and vendors. Our plans are to participate in 2014 - so please join us in next April. More information will be in future newsletters, on our website and Facebook.

Our year end Gala will be at the Science Museum on Wednesday, Dec. 11th, starting at 6:30pm. However, we really need volunteers to help set-up and decorate early (starting at 4pm - Carol Pontius and Alice Preston will be supervising this creative part of the evening. Excitement builds as the hor d'ovres and drinks start to float around the room, and the registration table, the raffle area, and SC sale merchandise always attract a big crowd - thus, we need your help to make sure things run smoothly! And, don't forget that we need help checking people out, distributing the leftovers, and cleaning up!

Our volunteers are the backbone of

this group. Thank you for your time and energy for making the Falls of the James Group Sierra Club so successful.

Wendy Floyd, Volunteer Chair abidan4@gmail.com



View from the Chair

by Adele Maclean

Ahhh, those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer—summertime, when the livin' is . . . as busy as ever for FOJG Ex Com members, just a little different.

Summer does mean a break from organizing and showing up for monthly Executive Committee (Ex Com) meetings, general program meetings, routine committee meetings, film festivals, campaigns, yard sales, and galas - the periodic events that demand so much time, energy, and creativity from all of us. And, of course, also teach us, energize us, and make us proud.

Yet for Ex Com members, summer is also the time when your group leaders devote hours behind the scenes evaluating the organization's accomplishments during the past year and setting goals for the future. That may not sound particularly hard, but think how you'd feel rolling out of bed early on a July Saturday to face a four-hour work session on goal-setting, priorities, and budget that ends with a formal Ex Com meeting (lunch not included). Add in all the different opinions, questions, personalities, and passions, and the thought is a little daunting, isn't it? At least, you'd want to be certain that the time and energy you spent in that boardroom made a significant difference.

By that standard, the Ex Com's work session on July 20 was an unqualified success. All nine members of the Ex Com were there. Six of them had recently participated in an in-depth training program led by the Virginia Chapter's Kate Addelson over a period of months to identify ways to strengthen our group's

leadership and internal operations. The training culminated with a detailed action plan and PowerPoint slide show, which the training team presented to the Ex Com as a whole. After some discussion the Ex Comm endorsed the plan as its first major goal for 2013-14. Items in the action plan will be incorporated into the Ex Com's task list that now heads each month's meeting agenda.

During the course of the morning - after filling newsprint sheets around the room with ideas, distilling them down to a short list of favorites, and setting priorities through a weighted voting exercise - Ex Com members adopted three other short-term goals and began the conversation about how to accomplish them. The new goals include a survey of the membership to determine your interests and ideas for future programs, campaigns, and activities; an expanded Recycling Breakthrough! 2013-14 Contest for area school-aged students; and a new pollinators and anti-genetically modified foods advocacy campaign. (Watch for more about all three developments in the coming year and, better yet, think about the various ways you might like to participate.)

Following that important work, the Ex Com reviewed a draft budget line by line, tweaked it, and approved it informally as revised. Because of the changes, adoption of the 2013-14 budget would have to wait until the next Ex Com meeting when the group could review and agree on a revised draft.

The Ex Com's work behind the scenes that bright summer day (and the days that led up to it, as well as those that followed it) will pay off in numerous



ways for the Falls of the James Group. For one thing, the work session opened communications among members of the Ex Com, trained us, and made us a stronger team. In addition, of course, our hope is that our specific goals will put the group's energy and resources to the best possible use, advancing leadership and organizational effectiveness (**Goal 1: internal operations**), engaging current members' more fully and attracting new members (**Goal 2: surveying the membership**), generating publicity and educating the next generation of Sierrans and their families (**Goal 3: recycling contest**), and raising awareness, enjoying and exploring the outdoors, and protecting our fragile planet (**Goal 4: pollinators/No GMO campaign**).

Without question, we have accomplished a lot this summer. With your help, our work will produce positive results season after season.

September Amazing Raise to benefit The Sierra Club Foundation

This year The Community Foundation will list The Sierra Club Foundation during the "Amazing Raise", a fundraising campaign to assist qualified nonprofit organizations in the Richmond area. The Amazing Raise lasts only 36 hours, beginning on Wednesday September 18 at 6 am, lasting through Thursday, September 19 at 6 pm. During this time qualified organizations compete for prizes based on donation type (see below).

So, dear Members, please get your credit or debit card ready and be prepared to donate by going to www.giveRichmond.org and look for The Sierra Club Foundation. Gifts must be at least \$25 each, but there's no maximum amount you can donate, and all donations are 100% tax deductible! There are prizes for organization receiving the most \$50 donations, the most donations, the fastest donations (earlybird) and the latest donations (procrastinators').

It's fun, quick, and very competitive. We split all the funds raised 50-50 with the SC State Chapter, so your donations will be used here in Richmond and central VA, strictly for educational programs, the Environmental Film Festival, outreach to schools, etc.

You will receive your tax-deduction notice immediately, so it's an easy, quick, painless way to support both Sierra Club organizations in the region. Thank you!

Baseball Stadium in Shockoe Bottom?

Your Ex Comm and the Falls of the James Group have been following the Baseball Stadium proposal for Shockoe Bottom since the first proposal in the early 2000s. Although we have been hearing rumors this Spring that the Mayor will try to ram the proposal through, and City Council has been trying to thwart the land and money grab by creating a process for Richmond's taxpayers and citizens to vote it up or down (a referendum), it would be premature to rewrite a new position until we hear from the Mayor regarding his proposal.

Here is our 2009 position, written by Scott Burger, which is still quite valid (and it provides numerous good reasons for killing a horrible project, if you do what good Sierrans do and voice their opinions to elected officials, policy-makers and community leaders.) If and when the Mayor does make a formal proposal, we promise you an updated position statement.

Here is our statement from 2009 on this topic:

To Members of Richmond City Council,

On behalf of the Sierra Club Falls of the James group, I wish to reiterate our opposition to building a baseball stadium in Shockoe Bottom.

The Sierra Club Falls of the James Group opposes the Shockoe Center baseball stadium proposal based on principles of conservation and smart growth. We preface our statement by saying we are not opposed to baseball or urban redevelopment. Rather, we wish to join the Richmond baseball discussion by imparting some basic environmental tenets that need to be recognized.

First, let us agree that Richmond deserves a world class sports stadium within its urban footprint. However, if we examine what cities all over the world are doing with new facilities, we can see that they are incorporating conservation measures and 'green' technology. The Boston Red Sox outfitted Fenway Park with solar water heating.

In Kent, England, the local soccer team has put in green roofs and green



rainwater retention in addition to solar for its clubhouse. The San Francisco Giants are installing PV solar to power nearby homes and bringing in more recycling and biodegradable materials. Bern, Switzerland's soccer team features the world's largest stadium-integrated photovoltaic solar system. We all saw the lengths that China went to make its Olympic venues environmentally aware. In short, why not Richmond? The current proposal suggests that a baseball field in itself will function as better storm-water retention area than what the current site offers. While this might, possibly, remotely, be true (with the City spending lots of money on infrastructure), we demand more green features from this and future development proposals in all parts of the City.

While some view the proposed Shockoe location as beneficial for the City, many citizens and environmentalists question the concept of plunking a massive structure in the middle of several sensitive, historic neighborhoods, a growing transportation center, and the topography of the Shockoe Valley, creek, and floodplain. When we compare the proposed site to the existing Boulevard one, there is clearly a sense of purpose that conflicts with smart growth principles. Of course, there is the immediate problem of building the stadium in a floodplain with millions of taxpayer dollars required to improve

drainage and retention. Displacing the water with a giant complex does not adequately solve the natural flooding.

The intermodal transportation center that has long been a part of the Shockoe Bottom revitalization plan should not be hindered or complicated by accommodating a baseball stadium. Both the Boulevard and Shockoe site demand more pedestrian-oriented development, but the Shockoe site's historic and natural features would be negatively impacted by a large stadium structure. We need to 'Restore the Core,' not bury it under more concrete.

In contrast, the Boulevard can still benefit greatly from baseball. As mass transit advocates, the Sierra Club believes a stadium-anchored Boulevard center could be a popular stop for the City's new bus rapid transit as well as fans commuting from the counties as they have done for generations. For these reasons, the Sierra Club strongly questions Shockoe Bottom as a location for the ball park.

Finally, the strongest environmental argument against the Shockoe proposal is that it spurns the re-usability of the existing Boulevard ballpark. Adaptive re-use is the most 'green' option there is. Concrete accounts for more than 5 percent of human-caused carbon dioxide emissions annually, mostly because cement, the active ingredient in

Cont'd from page 4

concrete, is made by baking limestone and clay powders under intense heat that is generally produced by the burning of fossil fuels. Making finished concrete products - by mixing cement with water, sand, and gravel - creates additional emissions because heat and steam are often used to accelerate the curing process. Destroying the Boulevard Diamond ballpark and building a whole new one in Shockoe

Bottom will greatly increase the City of Richmond's carbon footprint. Mayor Wilder, along with over 250 mayors from all over the United States, signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which seeks to reduce global warming. Certainly, polishing the existing Diamond, refurbishing it with more modern and green features is less wasteful, less detrimental when compared to creating a whole new stadium in a new location.

There are other arguments against the Shockoe stadium proposal (financial uncertainty, regionalism, open government are just a few of the issues). Many of them are being aired and heard in the local media. The Sierra Club calls for equal consideration of environmental concerns. We are confident that the public will not only recognize the true costs of this proposal if given the chance, but also join us in opposition

So What is a Walk Score?

by Andrew Payne

For more than 20 years I've called Richmond, VA, my home. The ease of walking to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Carytown, my dentist's office and a wide assortment of local businesses always has been an attractive feature for me and also many of my neighbors. According to the WalkScore (TM) website, my neighborhood (The Fan) has a score of 86 out of a possible 100 points for walkability. An adjacent neighborhood, Carytown, has a score of 88, and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) is ranked with a score of 91-just one and half miles away from home. So what do all these numbers really mean?

One of the perks of urban living is

the reduction of driving and the ease of walking to places like restaurants, dentist offices, hair salons and almost any other type of business or service someone may need. According to Wikipedia, Walk Score is the name of the company that developed a walkability index - also called a Walk Score. This walkability index is determined by an algorithm that scores amenities based on travel distance. Any amenity further than one mile away is awarded no points. The relevant amenities are described as parks, theaters, businesses, schools and other common destinations.

Do you like more walking and less driving? How about saving gas money



and getting more exercise? Needless to say, less driving helps the environment by decreasing air pollution and our demand for oil. Those are just a few perks of having a higher Walk Score!

Community Volunteer Calendar: What's Going On?

Compiled by Jane Hotchkiss

Cleanup at East End Cemetery every Saturday, 9am - Noon at 80 Evergreen Road, Richmond.
Contact: John Shuck at jshuck@rocketmail.com or call 728-9475.

Nature Walk at Evergreen every Saturday until December 28, 10 am - Noon at 3421 Wintergreen Dr., Wintergreen, VA 22958.
Contact: info@twnf.org or call 434-325-8169.

JRAC James River Cleanup at multiple locations on Saturday, September 14. In City: Bellemeade Community; Bryan Park; Pony Pasture Rapids (Paddlers welcome!); and Reedy Creek JRPS Visitor's Center.
Contact: www.jrac-va.org to register.

E-Cycle Day with collection of electronics & pharmaceuticals, free paper shredding, & \$7 for TV's on September 14, 9 am—Noon at 1710 Robin Hood Road off the Boulevard, Richmond. Contact: Darlene Mallory at 646-8325.

Sierra Club Chapter Fall Annual Gathering on September 20-22 at Caroline Furnace Lutheran Church Camp & Retreat Center, 2239 Camp Roosevelt Road, Fort Valley, VA 22652. Contact: corrina.bealle@sierraclub.org.

Cleanup in the Museum District on September 21. Contact: Kimberly at 363-6051.

The NYC-DC Climate Bike Ride on September 21-25 at The Space, 50 N. 3rd Street, Brooklyn, NY.
Contact Katie@vipi.org or www.climate ride.org.

Cleanup in Belleview District on October 19, 8am—Noon. Contact: Mike at 690-3242.

2013 Big Yard Sale HUGE Success !



Once again, this year's Big Yard Sale topped the achievements of the previous year's, thanks to the huge group commitment to planning, coordinating, getting out the volunteers, and strengthening partnerships. This year, we grossed over \$14,500, roughly \$1,000 more than in 2012. We broke the previous year's record, for a couple of reasons:.

Our partnership with Goodwill worked much better than the previous year. They gave us a drop-off trailer for storing early collection materials; they loaned us clothing racks and took all the sale 'leftovers' away when the BYS was done. Thank heavens for Goodwill!!!

We also organized early collection runs for the 2 or 3 weekends prior to graduation, which were very successful (and fun - no pressure!) Would you believe that the storage trailer was filled to the brim before Graduation weekend?

And Gill and Tamara rented extra U-Haul trucks which we used for collecting and storage over that last weekend - so we already had plenty of goods before our Big Monday collection day!

Planning for 16th annual BYS, which took months, was co-chaired by Tamara Smith and John Zeugner. Veterans like Gill Sigmon, Bob and Carol Pontius, Jane Hotchkiss, Wendy Floyd, and Dave and Carolyn Crighton coordinated everything from truck rentals to cashiers. During our big collection week, "Old Faithfuls" and new volunteers worked like zealots to make the week such a success ! Thank you Eric, Joe, Catherine, Gerry, Adele, Scott, MaryBeth, Alice & Bob, Jamie, Andrew, Tracy, Anne, Eric von, Tyla, Dee, Dede, Jackie, Jan, Vaughn, Joel & Margaret, Tom & Gretchen, Roger, George, Phyllis, Kelly, Lit, Catherine, Travis, Bridget & Larry, Edie, Courtney, Kate, Barbara,

Marissa, Leigh, Bill, Bruce, and anyone else I neglected to mention.

Also, kudos to the University of Richmond staff who were so helpful, especially Megan Litke, who was recently promoted to be U of R's Sustainability Manager. Congratulations, Megan !

And we had a big stroke of good luck: The Richmond Times Dispatch came to the campus on Tuesday, took pictures, and interviewed many of the volunteers. They ran a great story on Wednesday, and Claire Collins, a newcomer to the BYS who worked like a pro, got her picture on the RTD metro section cover! This valuable publicity must have contributed to the long line at the Gym early Saturday morning, despite the pouring rain! As customers left with their new-found treasures, everybody still had big smiles on their faces! Thank you, one and all!



Member Interest Survey – ONLY 10 questions!

We want the Falls of the James Group of the Sierra Club to be YOUR club but we need to hear from you! Please give a few moments to tell us what you want for and from the club and how you feel about actions and environmental issues. We've designed a 10 question survey to provide all of us with an avenue for input into the

direction of OUR club. Go to the following web link <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NXNCBTT>. In the interests of conservation we are trying to do this paperless with just a few blank paper copies being made available to members who attend the September 18th program meeting at UR Jepson Alumni Center. Deadline to participate

in the survey is October 1, 2013. We will have a drawing for those who completed the survey and provide the optional contact information. Winner of the drawing will be treated to complimentary dinners for the winner and a guest at the December Holiday Gala. **PLEASE, DO IT NOW!**

Put your tax free dollars to work right here in Central Virginia - Please contribute to The Sierra Club Foundation. *by Tamara Smith, Group Fundraiser*

Tax year 2013 may be one of the last years in which taxpayers can deduct donations to tax free organizations such as The Sierra Club Foundation, with our own Falls of the James Group account. Donations to the FoJG SCFoundation account have supported our local RVA Environmental Film Festivals (at the Byrd Theater); educational donations (like the

Conservation Committee's 2012-13 Recycling Video Contest) and other non-profit environmental and educational organizations we partner with. Please help further our educational and charitable mission by making your donation before the holiday rush in order to secure your tax deduction for 2013. Gifts can be made in memory of, or to honor someone or

an occasion (and we can recognize this in the Fall Line, if you'd like)
Checks must be made to "The Sierra Club Foundation" with notation "Falls of the James Group Acct GG3552". Contact Marybeth Mains, Group Treasurer, for further instructions and mailing address. marybeth125@verizon.net.

Executive Committee Officers & Committee Chairs for 2013:

			Ex Comm Officers' Terms Expire:
President	Adele MacLean	amaclean94@gmail.com	Dec. 2013
Vice President	Eric Vrabel	evrabel@yahoo.com	Dec. 2013
Bike-Ped	Vacant		
Conservation	Adele MacLean	amaclean94@gmail.com	
The Fall Line Editor	John Zeugner	jjzeugner@comcast.net	
Fundraising	Tamara Smith	tamsmith47@gmail.com	
Inner City Outings	Vacant		
Membership	Andrew Payne	awpayne1029@me.com	Dec. 2013
Outings	Andrew & Shavon Peacock	shavonandrew@verizon.net	
Acting Political/Legislative	Vacant		
Programs	John Zeugner	jjzeugner@comcast.net	Dec. 2014
Publicity	Jane Hotchkiss	jhotchkiss2@netzero.net	Dec. 2013
Secretary	Catherine Welch	welshcm@verizon.net	Dec. 2014
Sustainability	Vacant		
Treasurer	Mary Beth Mains	marybeth125@gmail.com	Dec. 2014
University Liaisons: VUU	Vacant		
	VCU	Vacant	
	UofR	Vacant	
Volunteer Coordinator	Wendy Floyd	abidan4@gmail.com	Dec. 2014
Website & Facebook	Eric Vrabel	evrabel@yahoo.com	Dec. 2013
Twitter and &	Andrew Payne		

Note, we have several vacant offices which we'd love to fill. You don't have to be an Ex Comm delegate to volunteer to chair a committee (and this is a good way to start if you are considering getting more involved with our local Group leadership!) Feel free to talk to Adele or Eric about any of this!

September Group Canoe Trip Suggested

Andrew and Shavon Peacock are avid outdoors people - they hike; they paddle, they explore caves, they are fun to be with, and most importantly, they volunteered to head up our Outings program almost two years ago.

But their best efforts at planning and organizing trips for our group have attracted only a handful of members. For example, last year, a river canoe trip with 30 potential places drew only 4 of our members - the rest being Sierrans from other groups or friends of FoJG members. Are we getting old, are our weekends too crowded, is it too far to drive, or what?

Nevertheless, the Peacocks are trying

again, suggesting a fall canoe trip that is a little farther afield, but well worth the extra travel time (we do car pool, don't we, and get to know each other better on road trips, right?)

They have suggested Merchants Millpond State Park in NC, just over the border from VA and about a 2 hour and 15 minute drive away. People can bring their own canoe(s) or kayak(s) or rent their own canoes at the park. It would not necessarily be a guided trip; there is a canoe trail there, and people could go where they want to, or follow the Peacocks. Andrew and Shavon have been there twice, say it's very beautiful, and say you can't get lost there! People could also stay longer and camp, there

if they were so inclined.

They have suggested Saturday, September 14th. They recommend an early start of 7am so we can be on the water no later than 10am. Participants could bring picnic lunches and we could get off the water by 2 or so. Sound like fun?

Since the Peacocks are not approved Sierra club trip leaders, this would have to be more an informal outing of interested folk from the club coming along for the ride. We could help organize car pooling for those who are interested in going, or individuals could arrange to meet friends at shopping centers or park-n-ride lots to carpool or caravan..

Information about Merchants Millpond State Park: 183-196 Mill Pond Rd, Gatesville, NC 27938, phone # - (252) 357-1191

The 760-acre millpond is more than 190 years old and has developed into complex, mature ecosystems. Towering bald cypress and tupelo gum trees, displaying growths of Spanish moss and resurrection ferns, shade the pond's dark, acidic waters. Numerous species of aquatic plants, such as the floating yellow cow lily and the submerged coontail, thrive in the pond. A red and green layer of floating duckweeds and water fern often covers the water's surface.

At the upper end of the millpond is Lassiter Swamp, an ecological wonderland containing remnants of an ancient bald cypress swamp, an eerie "enchanted forest" worthy of a fairy tale. Mistletoe has twisted and gnarled the trunks and branches of tupelo gum into fantastic shapes. Surrounding the aquatic communities is an unspoiled wilderness. Stands of American beech highlight a mixture of pine and hardwood forests.

Canoe Rental - First Hour - \$5/hour; Additional Hours - \$3/hour

Canoe Rental: Canoe Campers - \$20 per 24-hour period.

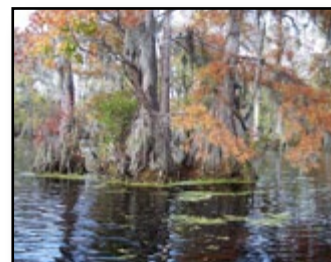
For those interested in camping, see <http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/memi/facilities.php>

For additional information about the park, see <http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/memi/activities.php>

For directions and map, see <http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/memi/pics/maptowdir.pdf>

Map of the park is at <http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/memi/pics/parkmap.pdf>

People should contact Andrew and/or Shavon at shavonandrew@verizon.net or (804) 320-2318 if they want to attend, or if they have questions.



Social and Volunteer Appreciation Night

This year, we moved the Social and Volunteer Appreciation Night ahead a month, to May, so it was a week after the BYS, and we were hoping for cooler weather than June.

We met at the Carillon Shelter in William Byrd Park (see photo). Everyone brought pot luck dishes, most brought their own plates, knives and forks, napkins and glasses. All brought a great sense of relief, that the BYS was over and done with! As the evening cooled, good food, fine fellowship, and a great time was had by all!



In June, instead of meeting at the Jepson Center, we took a field trip to preview the Richmond Hostel Project under construction in downtown. The Richmond Hostel Project has been a multi-year volunteer-led effort to renovate the former

Otis Elevator building at 7 North 2nd Street (across from the Main Library). Our Falls of the James Group made a \$5,000 donation to help with the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of this historic building, which will be member of the Hostelling International network.

After the tour, we walked to the Storefront for Community Design, Richmond's non-profit design and building resource, at 205 East Broad Street, and heard about their free planning and design work in the community. We enjoyed snacks and soft drinks, and said goodbye to each other, for the summer. Love and peace, y'all!

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General Membership Meetings, Third Wednesday Each Month at 7 pm., September - November and January - May at the Jepson Alumni House, on the U of R campus.
Meetings are Free and the Public is Invited to Attend !
<http://virginia.sierraclub.org/FOJ>

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

Chair	Adele MacLean	amaclean94@gmail.com
Vice Chair	Eric Vrabel	evrabel@yahoo.com
Secretary #1	Catherine Welsh	welshcm@msn.com
Treasurer	Mary Beth Mains	marybeth125@verison.net

Group Delegates Elected by Membership (Ex Comm)

Scott Burger	EXPIRES Dec 14
Wendy Floyd	EXPIRES Dec 14
Jane Hotchkiss	EXPIRES Dec 13
Adele MacLean	EXPIRES Dec 13
Mary Beth Mains	EXPIRES Dec 14
Andrew Payne	EXPIRES Dec 13
Eric Vrabel	EXPIRES Dec 13
Catherine Welsh	EXPIRES Dec 14
John Zeugner	EXPIRES Dec 14

The Executive Committee meets usually the second Wednesday, August - June 7:00 pm at the SC VA Chapter Office, 422 E Franklin St, Suite 302.
 Visitors are welcome to attend!

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

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