

THE FALL LINE

September 2014 - December 2014



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

Again, this year the FOJG will reimburse ½ the registration fee for up to six FOJG members for attending the Virginia State Chapter Fall Gathering to be held September 26-28, 2014 at the Caroline Furnace Camp in the heart of George Washington National Forest. Please see the latest copy of The Old Dominion Sierran for details and you can register on the state chapter website.

The two night weekend features nature hikes, spectacular scenery, music, fun,

comfortable lodging, great food, informative workshops and fellowship with other Sierrans. Liz Guertin, an outings coordinator from DC will offer first aid and outings - leader training workshops. Please alert any FOJG Ex Comm member if you plan to attend and are requesting ½ registration fee (up to \$49). This offer is for reimbursement after attendance and is on a first come, first serve basis. Transportation is your responsibility; carpools may be possible

through the State Chapter office.



The Sierra Club Foundation included in this year's Amazing Raise

The Sierra Club Foundation will be listed as a participant in September's "Amazing Raise", a fundraising campaign designed to help nonprofit 501c3 organizations in the central Virginia area raise funds.

This campaign lasts only 36 hours and begins at 6 am on Wednesday, September 17 and lasts until 6 pm on Thursday, September 18. We strongly encourage all Sierrans to participate. This is our opportunity to contribute painlessly to the group and receive a tax-credit for your donation since we won't be fund raising during our Holiday Gala. Donations must be made only on the Internet, using credit or debit cards only! NO cash or checks! The minimum donation is \$25, there is no maximum. Please be aware that each \$50 donation to our SC Foundation will qualify the Sierra Club

Foundation for any of the special prizes offered by The Community Foundation as incentives: the grand prize; the early bird prize, a procrastinator prize, or 1st, 2nd, or 3rd best fundraising prizes.

To make your donation go to www.theamazingraise.org and choose **Sierra Club Foundation**. You may even identify your gift in honor or memory of someone such as Erich Von Ruffer, a Sierra Club member who recently passed away. Unless you decide to donate anonymously, your name will be shared with The Sierra Club Foundation. There is no fee to donate and you will receive an immediate acknowledgement,

thank you, and printable tax receipt for 100% of your donation.

Coordinated donations have the best chance of winning a prize. Check <http://virginia.sierraclub.org/foj> daily to see our strategies for making the most of your donation. If you'd like to participate with a team of Sierran donors contact tamsmith47@gmail.com or call her at 647-8130.



Eagle Tour on the James with Captain Mike Ostrander RESCHEDULED to Saturday, Sept 27th, from 4-7 pm. See Page 3 for more information !

Fall General Meeting Programs, Jepson Alumni Center, U of R Campus

September 2014

General Meeting & Program:

Wednesday, September 10th, 7pm.
Toxic Chemicals in Virginia: What are the Risks? What are the Remedies?
with *Professor Noah Sachs,*
Director, Merhige Center for
Environmental Studies,
UR School of Law.

Professor Sachs is a nationally known environmental law expert, with a focus on climate change, toxic substances and hazardous waste regulation. He has been outspoken about recent toxic spills in Virginia: the crude oil train spill in Lynchburg, the Dan River coal ash spill and tracking EPA's efforts to clean the state's Superfund sites.

Did you know that Richmond is the asthma capitol of the U.S.? Come and find out why!



October 2014

General Meeting & Program:

Wednesday, October 8th, 7pm.
Richmond Citizen Lobbyist Workshop
with *Corrina Beall*

and the Fall Plant-Swap
in the Jepson parking lot,
starting at 5:30pm.

Want to have a bigger say in how Virginia is governed? If you are interested in talking to your elected officials about our environment, join us to learn how you can build influence with your state Senator or Delegate as a Sierra Club Citizen Lobbyist.

Please attend this training session and discover how easy it really is...*Talking to your Elected Officials: how you can impact Virginia Policy as a Citizen Lobbyist!*

We will also discuss briefly the upcoming elections and our State SC recommendations!



FOJG Sierra Club Fall Plant Exchange Before Our October Meeting

Fall is the time for planting perennials, especially native plants for pollinators!!! Native plants are the best plants to benefit native pollinators because the plants and critters co-evolved to support each other. If you have divided your perennials or have some extras, please, bring them 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 meet and do the exchange in the parking lot at the Jepson Alumni Center beginning at 5:30 pm. Please, NO plants in the building - put them in your vehicles instead. Please pot or bag each plant separately for ease of exchange.

And, it would be nice if you could label plants with common name and growing requirements.

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

November 2014

General Meeting & Program

Wednesday, November 12th, 7:00 pm.
Modeling Sea Level Rise Along
Virginia's Coast
with *Dr. Carl Hershner*

Dr. Hershner is the Director of the Center for Coastal Resources Management and works with VIMS. His research interests are in tidal and non-tidal wetlands ecology, landscape ecology and resource management/policy issues. His work is presently focused on coastal watershed management.

He has worked extensively on modeling sea level rise along VA's coast, its impacts on Hampton Roads and other low-lying areas, and is helping develop policies to prepare for these calamitous changes



RESCHEDULED Eagle Tour on the James with Captain Mike Ostrander Saturday, September 27th, 4-7 pm

Organized by Shavon and Andrew Peacock

The May 2014 Sierra Club sunset wildlife cruise on the James River with Captain Mike Ostrander was cancelled due to inclement weather. It has been rescheduled for Saturday September 27th, from 4-7 pm. Note that 11 of the nearly 30 people scheduled to go on the May trip have re-signed up to go that day. The max number of people who can go are 30. The cost is \$55 with \$10 per person going to the Sierra Club. Please forward this information to friends and other interested parties.

This is an extraordinary nature trip --you will see bald eagles, osprey, great blue herons, and marine life. It is a fantastic trip, and we highly recommend it. Bring your cameras to catch some of the fishing eagles and heron as they swoop down to catch fish as did Andrew in the photos below. The eagle photo is one of the residents that Mike regularly sees.

<http://shop.discoverthejames.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=SC-55-5-10>

Mike@DiscoverTheJames.com



The Falls of the James Group Holiday Celebration to be held on Monday, December 8th, at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden.

Departing from the format of our usual holiday gala, this year the FOJG has planned a special dinner and activities at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden's Robins Room. On Monday, December 8th at 7:30 p.m. we will be seated with fellow members of Falls of the James Group for a sumptuous buffet dinner. A cash bar will be available for alcoholic beverages.

After the meal, our dinner fee allows us to independently tour the illuminated gardens during the Festival of Lights. We may also explore the indoor displays, the Conservatory, library, and the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden gift shop, a perfect place to find something unique for that hard-to-please person on your holiday shopping list. All are open until 10:00.



The cost for this evening is only \$35 per person and includes all of the above except alcohol and purchases made during your tour. This is an ideal time to treat your friends (and potential Sierra Club members) and relatives to a memorable night out. We often find ourselves wishing to share something special with them and this could be one of the best ways to show them how special they are to you.

Menu to include:

- Grilled Chicken Breast w/Mustard Herb Sauce
- Herb Crusted Salmon
- Wild Rice Pilaf
- White and Wheat Rolls
- Caesar Salad
- Spinach Ricotta Phyllo Casserole
- Green Beans with Feta and Pine Nuts
- Cheesecake with Toppings
- Iced Tea and Coffee

Make your reservation for this holiday event ASAP, since we are capping the registration at 50, so its first come-first serve! Checks must be received by Wednesday, December 1st, made payable to "Sierra Club". Sorry, no credit or debit cards can be processed this year. Mail your check and include info on your name, your guests, etc to:

Anne Repp, 2221 Monument Avenue, Richmond VA 23220. Information: anne.repp@verizon.net or 355-3804.



5th Annual RVA Environmental Film Festival coming in first full week of February 2015.

Planning and fundraising has already begun, and we welcome your ideas and involvement! We are also hosting the Second Annual Local Documentary Contest-- deadline for entries December 10th, 2014. More information on this at rvaenvironmentalfilmfestival.com or contact Scott at 714-5444 or scottburger@me.com
To volunteer, please contact Tamara Smith at 647-8130, or email tamsmith47@gmail.com

View From The Co-Chair by John Zeugner AICP

Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch- Ch- Changes...



I'll get straight to the point: three of your Ex Comm delegates are stepping down at the end of their terms: Mary Beth Mains, Catherine Welsh, and me. Mary Beth has been our faithful Treasurer for the past 4 years. Her accounting background helped reorganize our previous system and she has simplified the reporting so Ex Comm members can understand our financial status. Mary Beth has a new job and her family obligations have become more pressing, so she's ready to pass the responsibility to someone else. Our Falls of the James Group is comprised of 1,650 members - surely, there's a person or two out there who can step in and serve as Treasurer for a term or two - and Mary Beth is offering free training and transition assistance.

Catherine and I both got involved with the Group in 1994, and within a couple of years, both of us were elected to Ex Comm. If you have paid attention to the group's leadership, you know that good volunteers come, stay a while, and go, while others manage to hang on forever (or so it seems). Each of us independently realized that our 20 years of service to the group has been long enough, and it was time to encourage new blood to infuse the group, i.e. new energies, new personalities, new approaches, and new ideas!

All three of us are committed to

helping the Ex Comm and the Group transition through these changes, and work with new members, provide training and gentle assistance, but Group members will need to step forward!

Catherine had been our Secretary for the past few years. She takes very reliable minutes and keeps track of which Ex Comm member said they would do what task - a "to do" list for us, from month to month, which is very helpful. She also manages to get publicity about our meetings and speakers into various media outlets (but this could be done by another person.). Plus, she has been chairing the Pollinators Committee, which she may continue to, and wears her bumble bee costume at public events (maybe the most rewarding part of the job...)

I have been the Program Chair since 2001. I'd be glad to help the new program chair line up programs and speakers through the Spring, and even into the fall - honest, it's easy work - just watch the headlines, and ask fellow Ex Comm members for ideas.

I have also been the Newsletter Editor since 2009, after writing regularly for it for a dozen years. Shortly after I took over, your Ex Comm started talking about how to transition to a paperless newsletter. Producing, printing and mailing the newsletter costs us about \$1,300 per issue, three times a year; this is our biggest expense. The Ex Comm tried promoting an opt-out program so members could get an e-newsletter instead, but member interest in this was low. So we soldiered on for another five years. Occasionally, we would discuss whether it was helpful to the group - did people read it or recycle it? Did they hang onto the newsletter for the calendar of events? Did it keep group members informed, so they felt that they didn't need to attend our general meetings? Catherine's survey last year gave us some information, that some read it,

but our Group has become somewhat infamous for still using paper newsletters.

With my retirement, the printed Fall Line newsletter will be a thing of the past. We will post most of the same information on our website, and send out e-newsletter blasts through the Internet, via email. The Ex Comm will need a volunteer to collect articles and updates, and have them posted to our website - an 'E-Newsletter Editor'. This should be a simpler job than the production of a paper newsletter. It will be much easier, since the most important item in the newsletter is showing the calendar of meetings and special events. Now, to stay informed, members will have to visit the website regularly, do Facebook, check emails or come to the meetings regularly.

Perhaps the most important thing about our leaving is that we can still be depended upon to regularly volunteer time and energy for work, physical and mental, and we will certainly help keep the Group cohesive, focused, and moving forward. The five remaining Ex Comm members can do this, but they will need your help and they will need you to step forward. The sooner the better...so we can transition affectively, OK?

Please examine and consider Catherine's Help Wanted table, **and think about what you can do for the Group, rather than what the Group do for you.** Your talents are needed, and are being solicited! Please talk to any Ex Comm member about how you can help! Thank you, and Good Luck!!

Erich von Ruffer, a 20-year plus member of our Falls of the James Group, passed away in June. Many of you knew him; he was not only active in all our events, but he was very friendly and engaging. He will be missed very much. His family has suggested that memorial gifts can be given to Doctors Without Borders at www.doctorswithoutborders.org or to The Virginia Sierra Club at www.vasierraclub.org

HELP WANTED!

(CONTACT co-chairs Adele MacLean amaclean94@gmail.com
or John Zeugner jzeugner@comcast.net

4 Ex Comm. Members

Responsibilities: Manage the FOJG in a group of 9, serve a min. of 2 years, and attend monthly Ex Comm. and program meetings.

Qualifications: Thinkers and Doers, energetic and dedicated, plays well with others.

State Ex Comm. Delegate

Responsibilities: Represent FOJG at State Ex Comm., attend bi-monthly Saturday meeting in Charlottesville.

Qualifications: Active member of FOJG, "in the know", good communicator, some computer skills.

Treasurer

Responsibilities: Money counter, manage checking account, state and national reports.

Qualifications: Logical and linear thinker, bookkeeping and math skills, some computer skills.

Secretary

Responsibilities: Chief nagger, keep minutes of Ex Com meetings, help with club communications

Qualifications: Logical and linear thinker, crisp memory, some computer skills.

Volunteer Coordinator

Responsibilities: Motivator, encourage members to participate in activities, schedule volunteers.

Qualifications: Outgoing and optimistic, strong people skills, clear communicator.

Political Comm. Chair

Responsibilities: Encourage club's legislative agenda, promote environmentally sensitive candidates.

Qualifications: Keen interest in political activities, good group spokesperson, confident public speaker.

E-Newsletter Editor

Responsibilities: Chief communicator, devise efficient method to keep members informed.

Qualifications: Logical and linear thinker, succinct communicator and writer, some computer skills.

University Liaison

Responsibilities: Reach out to VCU, UR, VUU student green groups for mutual support, efforts and successes.

Qualifications: Young at heart, social media user, good communicator.

Social Comm. Chair

Responsibilities: Generate FUN, organize social activities,

Qualifications: Outgoing and flexible, plays well with others.

Transportation Comm. Chair

Responsibilities: Promote alternative transportation options to carbon fueled vehicles, bike and pedestrian advocate.

Qualifications: Passionate about the issues.

VCU's Green Initiative Tour

On Wednesday, June 11th, Falls of the James Group members toured VCU's Green Initiatives with Steve Heinitz, FOJG member and VCU's Sustainability Program Coordinator and Erin Stanforth, Director of VCU's Office of Sustainability. Steve led us on a fascinating tour including the dining hall's solar water heater, the wind turbine and green roof on the Pollock building, solar connectors on the engineering building and on the Broad Street parking garage and a number of LEED certified buildings. Fun, interesting trip!



ATTENTION READERS!! This will be your last paper newsletter. All our communications and announcements will be moved onto our website, Facebook, Meetup and other social media, starting January 1, 2015

2014 17th Big Yard Sale a Huge Success

A big thanks to our many FOJG volunteers, members of Capital One's Aloha team, Hands on Richmond, Goodwill Industries, Caritas, the Green UR members and UR staff who insured the success of the 17th Annual Big Yard Sale held at Millhiser Gymnasium on May 16th and 17th. Thanks too to the dedicated members who scavenged the campus weeks before graduation, salvaging and storing student discards in the Goodwill trucks, capturing most of the undergrad clothes, goods, and furniture. What dedication!

When the Big Collection day, the Monday kick-off, arrived nearly 100 volunteers appeared, despite the 92

degree heat, to accept donations at the dumpsters, sort items, drive trucks and help any way they could.

Many thanks to Bob and Carol Pontius, the supreme managers of the Millhiser Gymnasium, preparing signage, supervising sorting, recycling plastic bags, bottles and cans, cleaning and testing microwave ovens, refrigerators, and electric appliances and everything else. Thanks to John Zeugner and Tamara Smith for their leadership, dedication and perseverance, and everybody else, veterans and new volunteers, for working so well with all the different demands, long hours, and additional work we hadn't expected

(loading the Goodwill trucks after the last sale) Congratulations to one and all!

Remarkably, more cash was taken in than ever before; almost \$16,000! (We did need to subtract about \$3 K in expenses, though). All proceeds to be split between our Group and the Green UR, the student environmental group on campus.

We're hoping that you will participate again (or for the first time) in 2015. You should visit our website for on-line registration for early collections; the biggest collecting day Monday, May 11, 2015 and the sale dates of Friday May 15th, and Saturday, May 16th.

BYS Volunteer Appreciation & Celebration Picnic

It is becoming a tradition to celebrate the end of the BYS with a picnic in Byrd Park: Great food, good friends and colleagues, and an early taste of Summer.... *what fun!*



Photos from Volunteer Appreciation Picnic Celebration

View From The Co-Chair by Adele Maclean (Slightly Subversive) Suburban Environmentalism

Like most of you, I've been thinking about ways to reduce my carbon footprint throughout my adult life. I am proud of the numerous changes our family has made as we've advanced toward an environmentally responsible lifestyle. Yet, I am painfully aware of how much further we have to go, and I am awed and inspired by extra steps taken by Falls of the James Group members.

Since I fervently believe that environmentalists need to be gentle with ourselves and each other, I want to focus on a few out-of-the-ordinary personal successes. Note that I am drawn to any approach that takes environmentalism to a larger scale, that is, that moves past the emphasis on individual responsibility, as important as that is, and explores the even greater gains we can make collectively.

Home and Neighborhood

Inside our home we've made many of the same changes you have: insulating our attic and crawl space; turning off idle electronics, turning down thermostats in the winter and turning them up in the summer, replacing incandescent lightbulbs with CFLs or LEDs, running dishwashers only when full, etc. etc.

What we've done outside is a bit more unusual -- we use only an organic lawn service and have for years. This means we're not poisoning the earth or killing beneficial pollinating insects. We hope to set a trend in the neighborhood, which could possibly will have an even greater impact.

We've also planted native plants and numerous trees from the Arbor Day Foundation. Our driveway is all gravel, which facilitates groundwater recharge and reduces harmful run-off. (I also love the visual appeal of the small stones and the satisfying sound of the crunch under the tires that signals we're home.) We maintain an impressive compost pile in a corner of the backyard, replenished routinely by kitchen vegetable scraps and yard waste. Perhaps most unusual and possibly most annoying to our neighbors, we've allowed a felled tree to rot in our modest suburban backyard, providing an inviting habitat for insects and other small wildlife as it is slowly reclaimed by surrounding vegetation.

On a larger scale, we are working with a

group of like-minded individuals to create Richmond Cohousing, an intentional environmentally responsible co-housing neighborhood, though still on the drawing boards, but is inching closer to reality.

Co-housing is a concept that is grounded in private home ownership but with sustainable design, joint decision-making and shared resources as core values, so that every home does not need its own lawn mower, or complete laundry facilities, or a large kitchen. Instead the group works together to design smaller homes and one large common house with facilities all members of the group will share.

Office

At work, I am fortunate to have an environmentally conscious colleague who also helps to reduce waste, recycle all we can, and help the whole office consider our day-to-day impact on the environment. I take pride in the choices I make about lunch, which I bring from home in reusable plastic boxes, in a cloth tote bag, with a cloth napkin and real silverware. That way my lunch footprint is reasonably small.

The food itself is generally organic, often local produce, and my beverage of choice is water that I bring from home in a bottle. A bit more subversively, I am the secret enforcer of environmental good sense after hours, turning off lights in the restroom and empty offices and hallways, turning up thermostats in over air-conditioned rooms, and transferring thoughtlessly discarded aluminum cans from the trash to the recycling bin. Doing more to educate colleagues and working at the policy level for the entire building represent opportunities to make a bigger difference in the future.

Church

Since my church is currently undergoing a complete renovation, and stewardship of the earth is an article of faith for our congregation, environmental sustainability is already a major focus of the project. We are all committed to make big changes that will help us live our principles through the redesign and maintenance of our building and grounds. Additionally, a project I have initiated at church offers multiple benefits for our community, including the chance to



divert usable goods from the landfill. It's a large-scale swap that we call "The Moneyless Yard Sale," which we organize every three months.

The idea is simple. On a specified day advertised well in advance, everyone brings items they no longer need or can use and exchange them for whatever strikes their fancy, all free of charge. No money is exchanged, no items are tagged, no cashiers are needed. It couldn't be easier.

Volunteers sort the items, and if they're in short supply, "shoppers" instantly become volunteers to help out. At the end of the "sale", church members with vans or trucks pack up the leftovers and take them to be donated to the thrift store of their choice. The Moneyless Yard Sale then sinks without a bubble.

Not only does the event offer members with excess goods the chance to downsize, but it gives younger families, people who've recently moved to Richmond, or those with low incomes an opportunity to pick up needed items for free—and no one can distinguish those shopping for fun from those acquiring something out of desperate need. It is an event everyone enjoys. It also serves the slightly subversive objective of loosening the grip of capitalism on our lives by undermining the objectification of people as mere "consumers" or "customers." As a result, it is a wonderful community-building recycling experience and something any church or other community group could institute to reap the same rewards and thereby scale up the benefits for the environment, absolutely FREE.

Sierra Club
Falls of the James Group
 P.O. Box 25201
 Richmond, VA 23260
www.virginia.sierraclub.org/foj

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Richmond, VA
Permit Number 3022



**General Membership Meetings, second Wednesday each Month at 7 pm.,
 September - November and January - April at the Jepson Alumni Center, University of Richmond.
 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:

Co-Chair	Adele MacLean	amaclean94@gmail.com
Co-Chair	John Zeugner	jjzeugner@comcast.net
Secretary	Catherine Welsh	welshcm@verizon.net
Treasurer	Mary Beth Mains	marybeth125@verison.net

Group Delegates Elected by Membership (Ex Comm)

Scott Burger	EXPIRES Dec 14
Adele MacLean	EXPIRES Dec 15
Mary Beth Mains	EXPIRES Dec 14
Eric Vrabel	EXPIRES Dec 15
Catherine Welsh	EXPIRES Dec 14
Stefan Bogdanovic	EXPIRES Dec 15
Ralph R. White	EXPIRES Dec 15
John Zeugner	EXPIRES Dec 14
One Vacancy	

The Executive Committee meets usually the first Wednesday, August - June 6:30 pm at the SC VA Chapter Office, 422 E Franklin St, Suite 302. Visitors are welcome to attend!

For color newsletters we're on the Sierra Club Web:
<http://virginia.sierraclub.org/FOJ>
 Also visit us on Facebook and Meet-Up

For add/drop and address changes contact:
membership.services@sierraclub.org
 or call The Sierra Club (415) 977-5653

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

<http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org/fundraising/membership/adkit/membership/general-membership/general-membership.aspx>



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Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
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Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to: Sierra Club, PO Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org

F94Q W 5001 1

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Newsletter Print Services By Printersmark, Inc. A BBB Accredited Business since 3/1/1998
 6010 N. Crestwood Avenue, Suite F, Richmond, VA 23230 (one block west & one block north of Broad & Libbie)
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