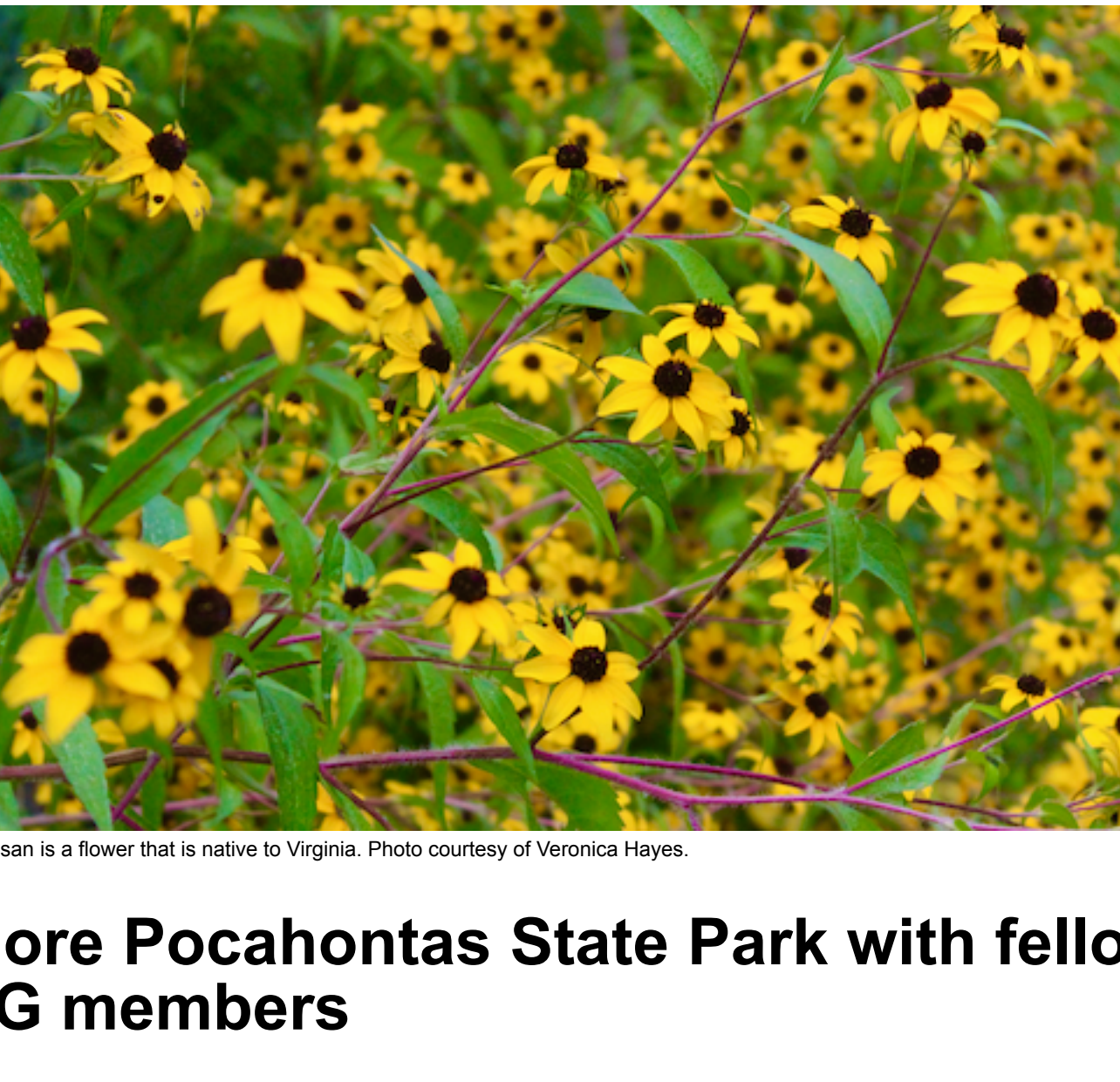


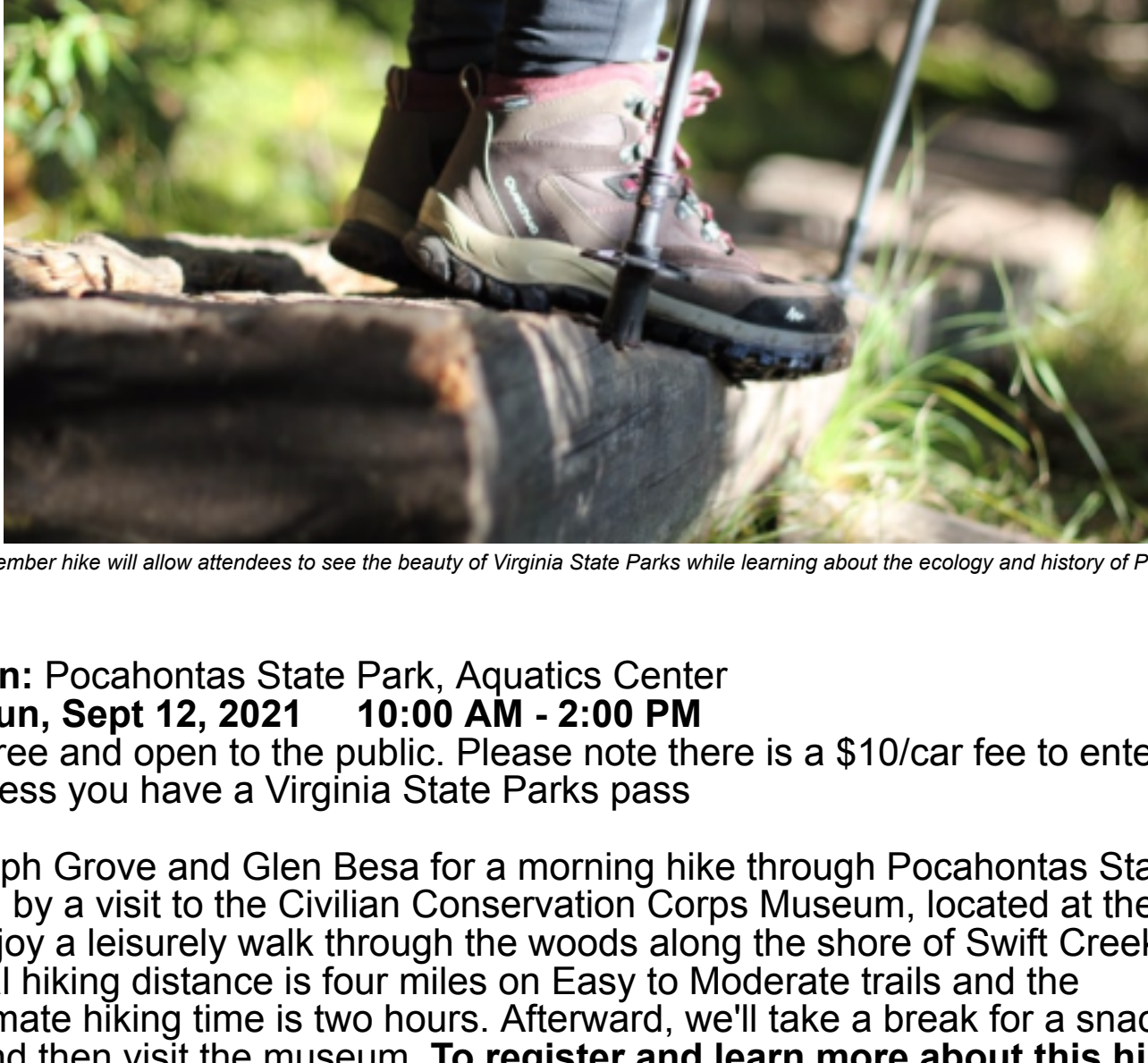
September 2021 Newsletter

Falls of the James Group



Black-eyed Susan is a flower that is native to Virginia. Photo courtesy of Veronica Hayes.

Explore Pocahontas State Park with fellow FOJG members



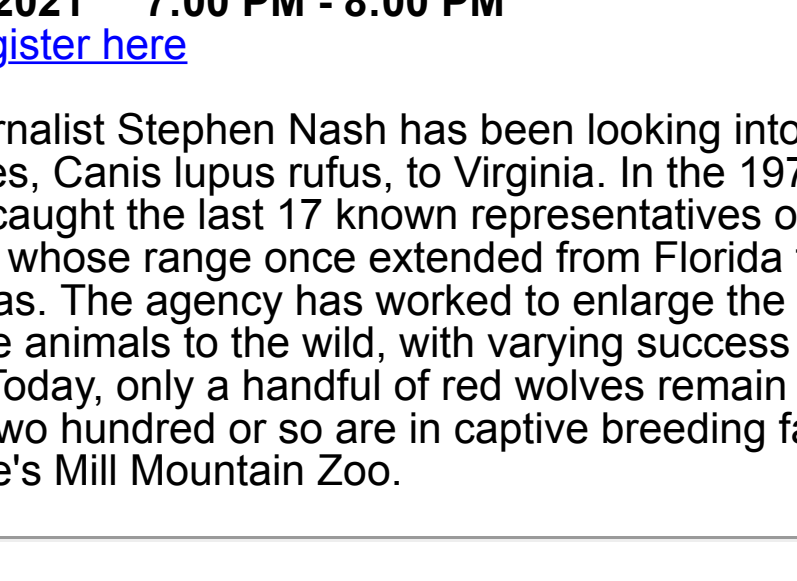
This mid-September hike will allow attendees to see the beauty of Virginia State Parks while hearing about the ecology and history of Pocahontas State Park.

Location: Pocahontas State Park, Aquatics Center
Date: Sun, Sept 12, 2021 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Cost: Free and open to the public. Please note there is a \$10/car fee to enter the park unless you have a Virginia State Parks pass

Join Ralph Grove and Glen Besa for a morning hike through Pocahontas State Park, followed by a visit to the Civilian Conservation Corps Museum, located at the park. We'll enjoy a leisurely walk through the woods along the shore of Swift Creek Lake. The total hiking distance is four miles on Easy to Moderate trails and the approximate hiking time is two hours. Afterward, we'll take a break for a snack or lunch and then visit the museum. **To register and learn more about this hike, [click here](#).**

Register for this Month's Virtual Program

Proposals to Reintroduce Red Wolves to Virginia



Red wolves were once prevalent throughout the southeast, including Virginia. By the 1980s, wild red wolves almost faced extinction. Red wolves are the most endangered mammal in North America. Photo courtesy of Margot Royette.

Cost: Free
Date: Tue, Sept 14, 2021 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Location: Virtual, [register here](#)

Richmond-based journalist Stephen Nash has been looking into proposals to reintroduce red wolves, *Canis lupus rufus*, to Virginia. In the 1970s, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service caught the last 17 known representatives of this critically endangered species, whose range once extended from Florida to New York and the Atlantic states to Texas. The agency has worked to enlarge the captive population and reintroduce these animals to the wild, with varying success and gale-force political headwinds. Today, only a handful of red wolves remain in the wild in coastal North Carolina, and two hundred or so are in captive breeding facilities, nine of which are at Roanoke's Mill Mountain Zoo.

Upcoming Monthly Programs



Photo courtesy of Veronica Hayes.

Stay tuned for these upcoming FOJG program registration links on our [FOJG Calendar](#).

10/12/21 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm – *Richmond Climate Emergency Resolution* with Richmond Councilmember Katherine Jordan

11/9/21 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm – *Plastic Pollution in Virginia: Trends, Sources, Solutions with Katie Register*, Executive Director of Clean Virginia Waterways of Longwood University, and co-founder of the Virginia Plastic Pollution Prevention Network

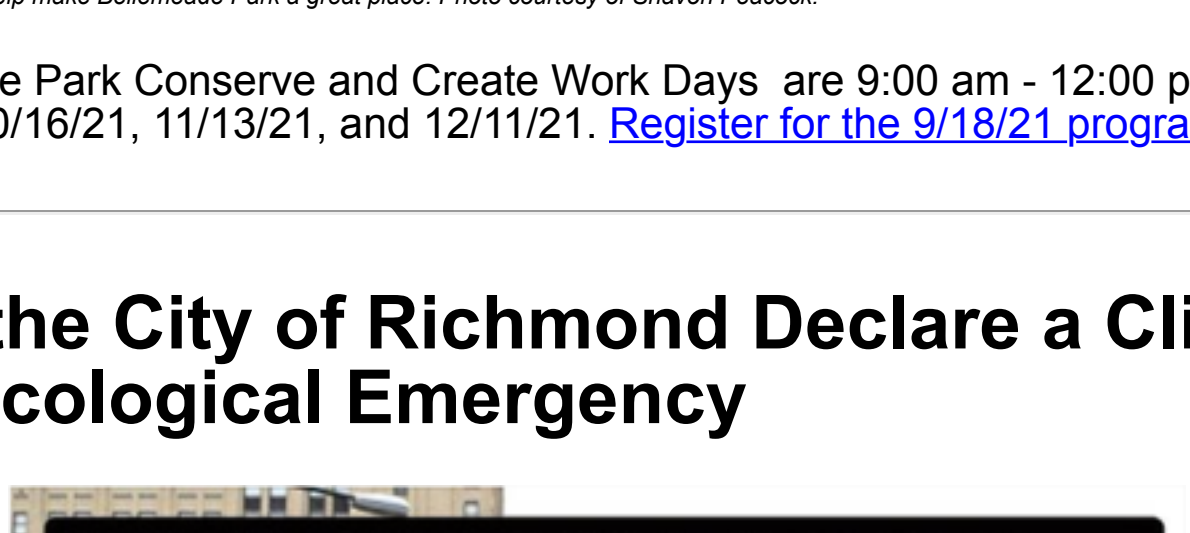
11/11/22 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm – *Monarchs: Endangered but not Protected* with Karl Green and Chris Burnside

2/8/22 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm – *University of Richmond Student Environmental Presentation Highlighting Conservation Projects* with Dr. Todd Lookingbill

3/8/22 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm – *Urban Farms* with Duron Chavis

4/12/22 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm – *What do you know about Wetlands and their Importance?* By the Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Volunteer at Bellemeade Park



Many volunteers help make Bellemeade Park a great place. Photo courtesy of Sharon Peacock.

Bellemeade Park Conserve and Create Work Days are 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, on 9/18/21, 10/16/21, 11/13/21, and 12/11/21. [Register for the 9/18/21 program here.](#)

Help the City of Richmond Declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency

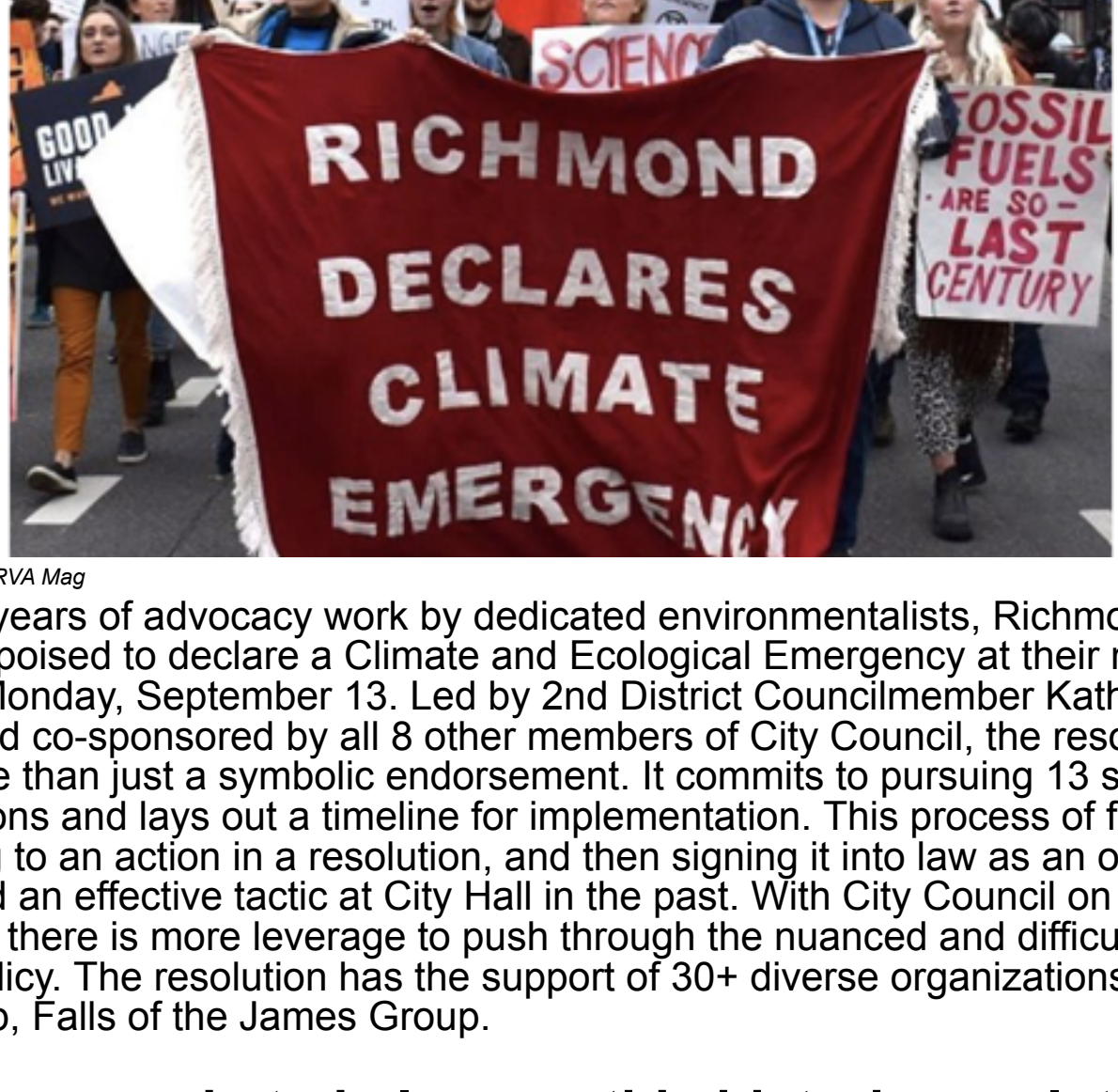


Photo courtesy of Erik King.

Following years of advocacy work by dedicated environmentalists, Richmond City Council is poised to declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency at their next meeting, Monday, September 13. Led by 2nd District Councilmember Katherine Jordan, and co-sponsored by all 8 other members of City Council, the resolution offers more than just a symbolic endorsement. It commits to pursuing 13 specific policy actions and lays out a timeline for implementation. This process of first committing to an action in a resolution, and then signing it into law as an ordinance has proved an effective tactic at City Hall in the past. With City Council on the record in support, there is more leverage to push through the nuanced and difficult work of crafting policy. The resolution has the support of 30+ diverse organizations, including Sierra Club, Falls of the James Group.

What can you do to help pass this historic resolution on September 13? Take Action!

- 1) If you live in Richmond City, sign the [petition](#)! These signatures matter and will be shared with Councilmembers and Mayor Stony.
- 2) Submit a Public Comment via email to CityClerksOffice@richmondgov.com. Due to COVID, it is unclear if the 6:00 p.m. meeting will be in-person, virtual, or a combination of the two. Watch our social media for details.
 - Written comments must be submitted to the City Clerk's office no later than 10:00 a.m. on Monday, September 13
 - Written comments received by the deadline will be provided to Councilmembers prior to the meeting and will be included in the record of the meeting

The proposed Charles City gas plant, also known as C4GT, is canceled



Photo courtesy of American Public Power Association.

By Joe Brancoli

The most delightful news came in early June of this year: cancellation of a proposed fracked gas power plant in Charles City!

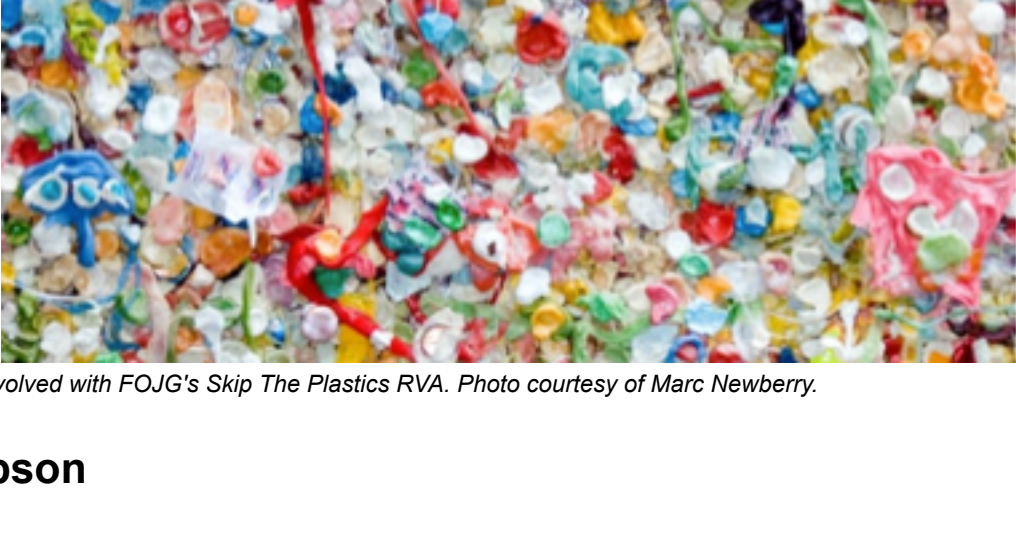
Almost a year ago, we learned that an even larger fossil fuel boondoggle, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, was cancelled. Now we've learned that the C4GT plant will not happen. Just as the demise of the ACP showed that thousands of citizens can prevail against governors, monopoly utilities, and regulators who try to ignore their rights, this case shows that corporations cannot plunder even the least populated county in the state. In both cases, when one monstrous project goes down we have more resources and heart to fight the next one, and the knowledge that the fight can be won!

This effort was successful with help from:

- Courageous legislators like State Sen. Jennifer McClellan, U.S. Rep. Donald McEachin
- Members of the powerful Stop Abuse of Virginia's Energy (S.A.V.E.) Coalition
- The tireless and fierce Concerned Citizens of Charles City County (C-5)
- Our current and former Chapter Pipeline organizers Lynn Godfrey and Jess Sims
- And dedicated **Falls of the James Group members**

Savor this accomplishment, then rally to stop the Chickahominy Plant and the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Recently landowners in Louisa, Hanover, New Kent, and other counties have received notice from a company that wants to survey their land for a pipeline, seemingly to supply the Chickahominy plant in Charles City. As noted above, the efforts go on.

Recycling 101, Sorting out Recycling Facts and Myths



Like Thompson is highly involved with FOJG's Skip The Plastics RVA. Photo courtesy of Mari Neuberger.

By Lisa Thompson

Paper or plastic? At the checkout counter, the answer is clear. "No, thanks. I brought my own bags!" However, what if you must make that choice in the bakery section? Purchase the item in a plastic clamshell or paper box. Kathy Russell, from TFC Recycling, the company that sorts and sells the recycled materials in our curbside bins, calls this decision "recycling."

Recycling requires us to understand which packaging materials and containers are actually recycled and have a post-consumer market. Then we can make purchasing decisions based on this information. Unfortunately, for the consumer, many plastic items have misleading labels which claim the package can be recycled when it can't. Sierra Club is suing companies that do this. Many state and local governments are putting pressure on the companies to make their packaging conform to what is actually recycled. This is known as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR.)

In a recent Zoom meeting with Russell, members of the Plastics Committee got some clarity regarding recycling. Below is a short summary:

Metals, cardboard, and paper are routinely recycled and converted into new materials. There is a robust market for aluminum, tin cans, and paper. Paper can be recycled up to seven times. According to Russell, most of the paper collected at their two facilities is shipped to domestic paper mills, with some leaving their Chesapeake plant in empty cargo containers destined for foreign markets like Mexico, Indonesia, and India.

Paper recycling includes:

- Any part of a pizza box or bakery box that is not contaminated with food particles
- Cereal, pasta, and cracker boxes
- Newsprint including glossy pages (no laminated pages)
- Paper bags
- Wrapping paper
- Milk and broth cartons (lids on)

You cannot recycle ice cream containers or take-out beverage cups because these have an extra plastic coating.

Glass can be recycled, and there is a market for crushed, recycled glass. However, facilities that recycle it actually lose money because the purchase price is so low. Facilities have contracts with localities to collect glass, despite the fact it is not profitable. When you recycle glass bottles and jars (not canning jars), remove the metal lids.

Plastics are classified by numbers:

- **#1 PET plastics** (water and beverage bottles, salad dressing, and peanut butter containers) are in high demand. Unfortunately, the clamshells, which do carry a #1 symbol, have slightly different properties, so recyclers don't want them. All those plastic produce containers stamped with the #1 symbol actually contaminate the bales.
- **#2 HDPE** containers also have good rates of resale. These consist of milk jugs, laundry detergent, and shampoo bottles. They need to be thoroughly rinsed.
- **#5 plastics** (yogurt and dairy product containers) are accepted in our recycling bins, but the fact is that there isn't much of a resale market for them. The likelihood of finding a market for it is much lower, so much so that many recycling facilities do not collect it. FFC Recycling does bale it, but since the demand is so low, it can sit in their facility for a long time waiting for a buyer.

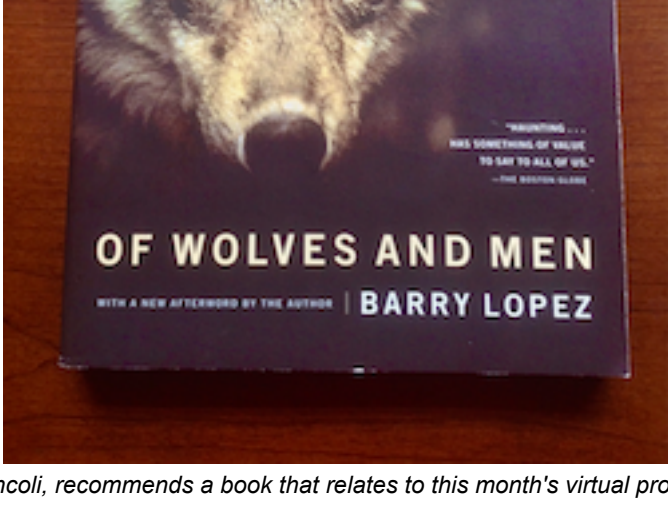
The current advice about plastics is to **leave all lids on the containers**, as they can be recycled too.

Never put plastic bags or plastic items that can tangle in the recycling bin. These can clog up the machinery in the sorting facilities and cause harm to the people who work on the line. There is a market for plastic bags and plastic film. These can be put in receptacles in front of Food Lion or Walmart. They are picked up by a Virginia company named Trex and turned into boards for decks and benches.

A lot of recycling that goes on in the U.S. is wishful thinking. To make informed decisions and to be a useful part of the recycling process, I recommend visiting the [CWMVA website](#) and link in "What to Recycle."

In short, **recycling is certainly beneficial and straightforward** when it comes to materials like metal cans, glass, and paper. Unfortunately, many of the products we eat come in plastic containers that **cannot** be recycled. Until clamshells are created in a way where they can be recycled with other #1 plastic, the answer to the original puzzle in the bakery section is to buy items in paper and scrub off any food residue.

Joe's Book Nook



FOJG Executive Committee Chair, Joe Brancoli, recommends a book that relates to this month's virtual program. Photo courtesy of Joe Brancoli.

By Joe Brancoli

To whet your appetite for FOJG's upcoming program, my suggestion on this month is *Of Wolves and Men* by Barry Lopez. Lopez has written and written on wild places and ecosystems around the world. Here he RIFF brings music and caution about wild canids, from mythology to taxonomy and the history of man's interactions with wolves. He takes an unflinching look at man's bloodlust to wipe out wolves.

On September 14, 2021, our speaker Steve Nash will share an effort to redress this carnage by presenting *Proposals to Reintroduce Red Wolves to Virginia*. Please enjoy this 1978 book as a companion piece to our presentation. As always, we ask that you shop at local independent bookstores.

Purchase tickets to the Richmond International Film Festival



Photo courtesy of the Richmond International Film Festival.

The Richmond International Film Festival will take place during the week after Labor Day, from September 7 - 12, 2021. The RIFF brings music and movies on a variety of topics to many venues in the city. Please check out their website, [view this year's schedule, and purchase tickets.](#)

Get Featured in the Newsletter

Photo of the Month and Member Spotlights

Have you recently volunteered for a meaningful project? Photographed something beautiful outdoors? Stumbled upon an interesting trail, park, or historic site? Contact [Veronica Hayes](mailto:VeronicaHayes@veronicasydneyhayes@gmail.com) at veronicasydneyhayes@gmail.com with the subject "FOJG Newsletter" for a chance to be featured in the upcoming newsletter. Please email pictures, a blurb, and important information such as your name, the date, and the location by the 22nd of the month.

2021 FOJG Executive Committee

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 VA Sierra Club Chapter Executive Committee: omethid@hotmail.com

Glen Besa, FOJG Political Chair and Outings Leader: glenbesa@gmail.com

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Thanks for all you do for the environment,
 Veronica Hayes
 Newsletter Editor
 Sierra Club Falls of the James Group

