

March 2022 Newsletter

Falls of the James Group



Trillium is a Virginia native that blooms in late March and early April. Native plants play a special role in their ecosystem, and planting them fosters local biodiversity. During this spring, FOJG will host hikes where native plants may be visible along the trails. In April, we are promoting the Native Plant Festival, highlighted in the newsletter's Outings section.

Register for our Upcoming Programs

Urban Farms with Duron Chavis



Photo courtesy of Richmond Magazine.

Cost: Free
Date: Tue, March 8, 2022 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Location: Virtual, register [here](#)

Hear Duron Chavis speak about his work as an urban farmer and community activist in Richmond. He is a recipient of the FOJG Green Giant Awards in 2021. His career began at the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia, where he founded the acclaimed Happily Natural Day Festival.

Wetlands - What Are They and What Value do They Contain?



Photo courtesy of Dr. Scott Neubauer.

Cost: Free
Date: Tue, April 12, 2022 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Location: Virtual, register [here](#)

Dr. Scott Neubauer, Associate Professor of Biology at VCU and wetlands specialist speaks about wetlands and their value and importance.

If you have suggestions for guest speakers or program ideas for the 2022 - 2023 FOJG program year, please contact [Shavon Peacock](mailto:Shavon.Peacock@verizon.net), FOJG Membership Engagement Committee chair at Shavonandrew@verizon.net. The [Membership Engagement Committee](#) meets virtually the last Thursday of the month from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. Contact Shavon if you are interested in participating in this committee and joining the email mailing list.

Join us for Outings



Join us for our Earth Day tree planting event. By planting trees we can leave a great legacy that benefits our community. *Photo courtesy of Shavon Peacock.*

3/19/22 9:30 am - 12:30 pm [Hike Dutch Gap Conservation Area](#) with FOJG member Ralph Grove. Register [here](#).

4/2/22 [University of Richmond Century Walk](#), presented by Elizabeth Halasz. Stay tuned for a registration link on our [Events Calendar](#).

4/16/22 9:30 am - 11:30 am [Hike Garland Dodd Park Point of Rocks Center](#), with FOJG member Shavon Peacock. Register [here](#).

4/23/22 FOJG hosts [Earth Day Tree Planting Project](#). Stay tuned for a registration link on our [Events Calendar](#).

4/30/22 9:00 am - 3:00 pm [Native Plant Festival](#) at Dorey Park in Richmond, hosted by Root 5 Family Farms and Keep Henrico Beautiful. Shereen Hughes, Bill Shanabroch, and Dr. Doug Tallamy will present at this event. Stay tuned for more information.

Volunteer at Bellemeade Park



Sierra Club member Lydia Pittman works with a young gardener at Bellemeade Park. Photo captured last summer. Photo courtesy of Shavon Peacock.

This month's Bellemeade Park Conserve and Create Work Day is on **March 5, 2022, from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**. We will be installing a drip irrigation system for our raised beds, spreading compost in the beds, installing rain barrels at the chicken chateau, rototilling wildflower beds, and installing wire cages to protect newly planted trees. Bring water and gloves. All tools that are necessary will be provided. Register [here](#) to volunteer and connect with Friends of Bellemeade Park on Facebook [here](#).

The Chickahominy Pipeline LLC halts the construction of its 83-mile natural gas pipeline



This "protect water" banner was photographed in Monroe Park on September 27th, during the 2019 climate strike. Photo courtesy of Veronica Hayes.

By Joe Brancoli

In a season when we welcome good news like a stranger at the door, there have been welcome occasions in the development of several major fossil fuel projects in Virginia.

Less than a year ago, the Chickahominy Pipeline was proposed as the conduit to supply gas to its namesake power plant in Charles City County. Not that the plant exists, either; in approximately four years, very little work has been done on it, but a dedicated pipeline was vigorously pushed, with the unique idea that it didn't need to be approved by the State Corporation Commission, the better to speed it through. Fortunately, the State Corporation Commission (SCC) did not agree with this reasoning and sent the pipeline back to the drawing board.

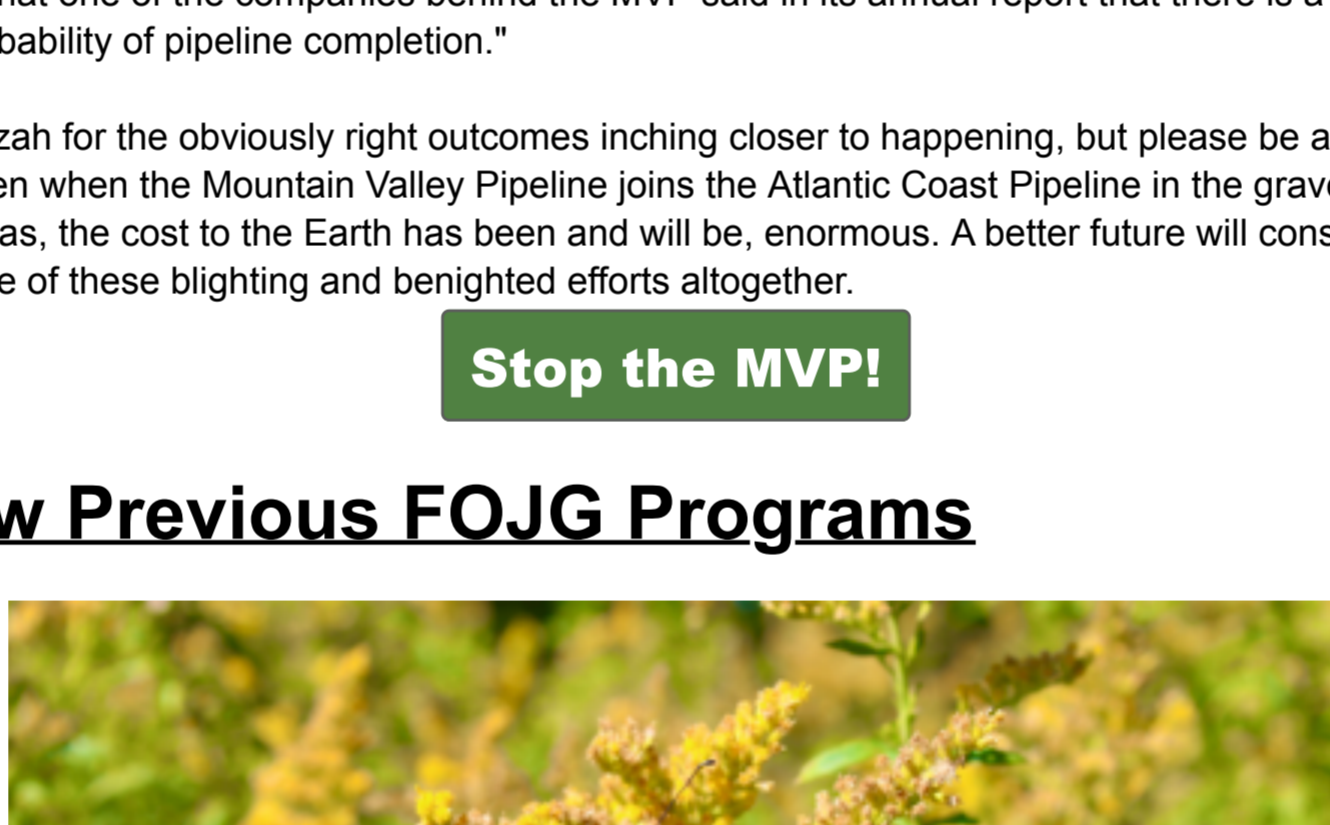
Meanwhile, the five counties through which it would run—some in FOJG territories such as Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Charles City—did not welcome the pipeline with open arms. In fact, the [supervisors acted properly skeptical](#) and listened to their concerned residents. Finally two weeks ago, when the grid operator PJM announced that the plant would go far down in its "queue" for supplying power to the grid, the company behind the affiliated [pipeline disclosed that it is "pulling the plug" on the project](#). Let us hope that their finger slips to the stop button and that once and for all, Virginia can be free of unnecessary and deadly facilities like this.

On another note, the saga of the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) continues, with reverses in court in recent months for this abomination. The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals has vacated three authorizations that it says were improperly given by federal agencies. These are for traversing the Jefferson National Forest, and for impacts anticipated to endangered species. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) may now deny the essential boring amendment, which decides how some of the remaining water bodies can be crossed. It will be very exciting if FERC denies this as many more delays to this seven-year, ridiculously over-budget project could finally end it. In fact, a [February 18th article on the Blue Virginia website](#) states that one of the companies behind the MVP said in its annual report that there is a "very low probability of pipeline completion."

So huzzah for the obviously right outcomes inching closer to happening, but please be aware that even when the Mountain Valley Pipeline joins the Atlantic Coast Pipeline in the graveyard of bad ideas, the cost to the Earth has been and will be, enormous. A better future with an absence of these blighting and benighted efforts altogether.

Stop the MVP!

View Previous FOJG Programs



Monarch butterflies are one of the most recognizable insects in Mexico, the United States, and Canada. Photo courtesy of Veronica Hayes.

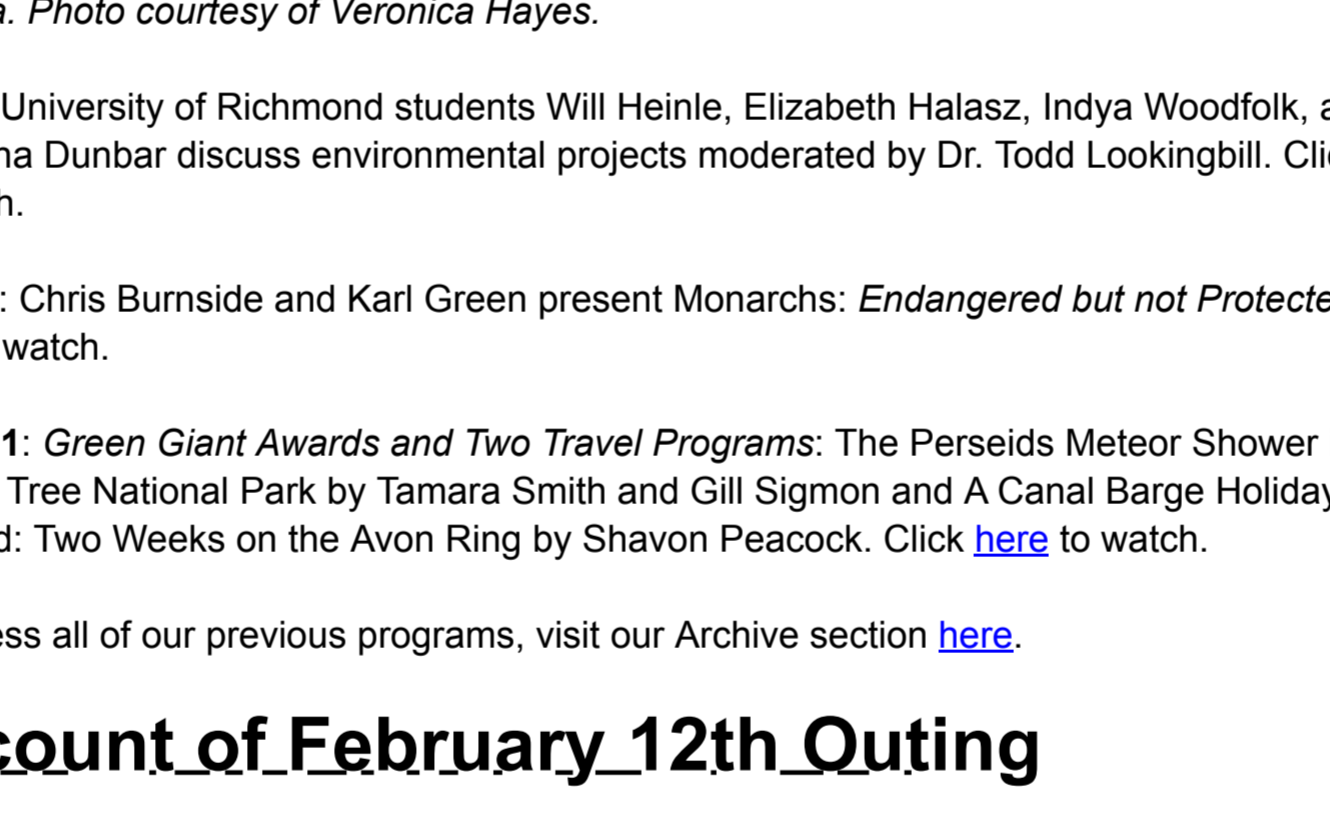
2/8/22: University of Richmond students Will Heinle, Elizabeth Halasz, Indya Woodfolk, and McKenna Dunbar discuss environmental projects moderated by Dr. Todd Lookingbill. Click [here](#) to watch.

1/11/22: Chris Burnside and Karl Green present Monarchs: *Endangered but not Protected*. Click [here](#) to watch.

12/14/21: [Green Giant Awards and Two Travel Programs](#). The Perseids Meteor Shower in Joshua Tree National Park by Tamara Smith and Gill Sigmon and A Canal Barge Holiday in England: Two Weeks on the Avon Ring by Shavon Peacock. Click [here](#) to watch.

To access all of our previous programs, visit our [Archive](#) section [here](#).

Recount of February 12th Outing

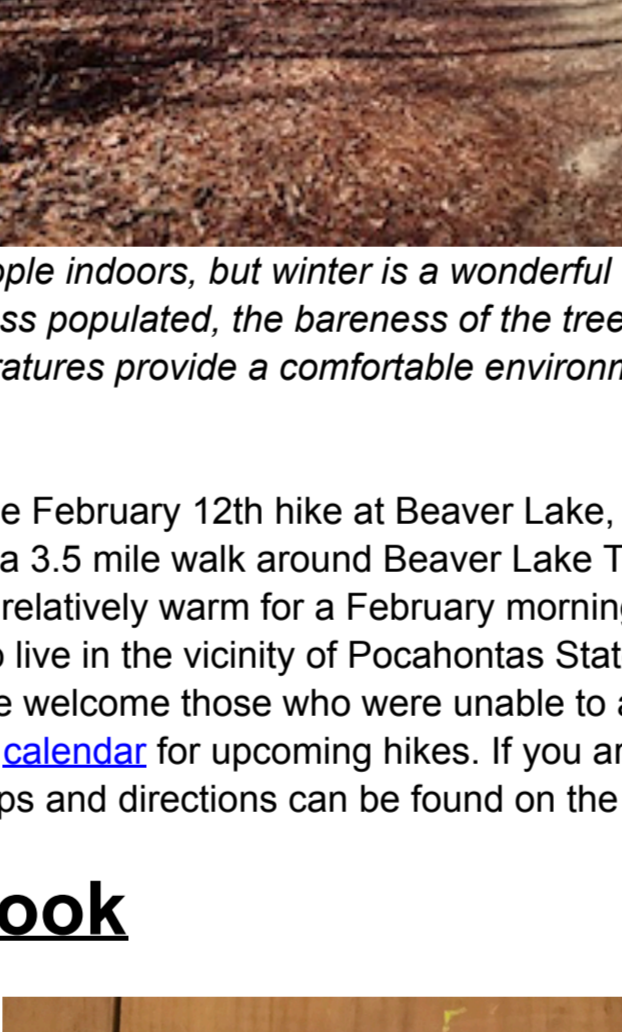


Winter sometimes drives people indoors, but winter is a wonderful time of the year to take a hike. During winter the trails are less populated, the bareness of the trees provokes a sense of novelty, and the brisk temperatures provide a comfortable environment for exercising. Photo courtesy of Ralph Grove.

We had a great turnout for the February 12th hike at Beaver Lake, led by Ralph Grove. In all, fourteen hikers came out for a 3.5 mile walk around Beaver Lake Trail at Pocahontas State Park.

The weather was sunny and relatively warm for a February morning, which made for a perfect hiking day. We're fortunate to live in the vicinity of Pocahontas State Park, where there are several great hiking trails. We welcome those who were unable to attend our February 12th outing to regularly check our [calendar](#) for upcoming hikes. If you are interested in exploring Beaver Lake Trail, hiking maps and directions can be found on the park [website](#).

Joe's Book Nook



"When you talk about destruction, don't you know that you can count me out (in)."
-Revolution by The Beatles.

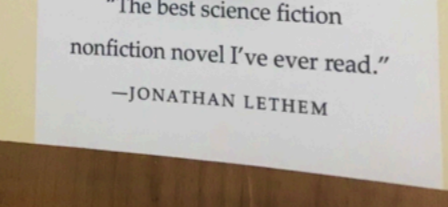
By Joe Brancoli

This month I bring to your attention *The Ministry for the Future* by Kim Stanley Robinson. I acknowledge Glen Besa and Dan Taylor from our Executive Committee as the inspiration for reading it. When two out of our nine Executive Committee members were reading it at the same time, I took notice. This book is listed as one of Barack Obama's Favorite Books of the Year, so some may consider it a must-read book of the moment.

At the outset, the author posits a heatwave deadly enough to spur the creation of the titular ministry, and frightening enough that the United Nations gives it decent funding and powers. The efforts conducted by the United Nations are not sufficient enough to command the nations and banks of the world to halt. There follows a potpourri of concepts about how a committed agency and world could try to halt the climate crises that are engulfing the Earth. I have learned much from Robinson's work of "science fiction non-fiction." The book is set in the very near future, and I wondered as I read, "is this real or imagined?" Has this been done or thought of?"

The Ministry for the Future is a book that is willing to imagine options that fit the gravity of the situation and may test your boundaries of acceptable practices. I write this review as I am halfway through the book, not knowing where this journey will lead, but thankful for the willingness of the author to grapple with huge questions. What is justified on behalf of future generations and the Earth? As always, when searching for this book, please support your local independent booksellers.

Updated National Sierra Club COVID-19 Response



The National Sierra Club Executive Director Mike Brune, Chief Operations Officer, Jen Trahan, and Ramon J. Cruz, President, as of August 5th, 2021, indicated that outings, meetings, and some events have resumed. All require a safety plan, written by the organizers, to be approved by the Virginia Chapter and National Sierra Club. In addition, all participants at any indoor event MUST be masked, regardless of vaccination status. These guidelines are extended through **May 31, 2022**.

Get Featured in the Newsletter

Have you recently volunteered for a meaningful project? Photographed something beautiful outdoors? Stumbled upon an interesting trail, park, or historic site? Contact Veronica Hayes 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.

2022 FOJG Executive Committee Contacts

Joe Brancoli, FOJG Executive Committee Chair/Leadership Chair: joesierra@gmail.com

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

Steve Carter-Lovejoy, FOJG "Skip The Plastics" Committee Chair: scarterlovejoy53@msn.com

Carille Greenberg-Ribley, FOJG Executive Committee Member: carillegr@gmail.com

Shavon Peacock, FOJG Secretary, Membership Engagement Chair, & Outings Leader: shavonandrew@verizon.net

Lee Williams, FOJG Advocacy Chair: lee.sierraclub.greennewdealva@gmail.com

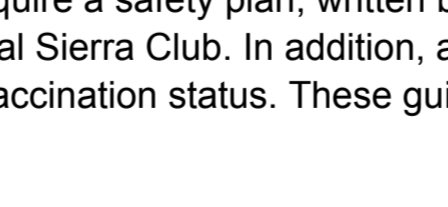
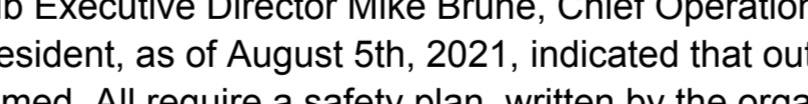
Aileen Rivera, FOJG Executive Committee Member: jgmoulds@aol.com

Sheri Shannon, FOJG Executive Committee Member: sheri@southsideleaf.org

Jessica Sims, FOJG Executive Committee Member: jessicaleesims@gmail.com

Dan Taylor, FOJG Executive Committee Member: dtaylor@bluegreenalliance.net

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



Donate

This email was sent by the [Sierra Club Virginia Chapter](#)
 100 W Franklin St, Mezzanine Richmond, VA 23220-5048