

RePowering Madison: A need to act

On December 12, the day the Paris climate agreement was signed, many communities around the world held “Keep Fossil Fuels in the Ground” rallies.

In Madison, 250 people rallied on the Capitol steps to demand strong climate action and move off fossil fuels, reduce energy use, and move to renewable energy. Speakers talked about a carbon fee and dividend, divesting from fossil fuel investments, how Enbridge’s proposed line 66 must be stopped, and our community’s overuse of fossil fuels. Sierra Club Vice President Spencer Black noted that while we have an ambitious new climate accord, much work is needed to achieve this historic agreement’s goals.



Spencer Black at 12/12 rally

However, we face significant issues. Madison Gas and Electric (MGE), the utility serving the majority of Dane County households, obtains most of their electric power from burning hydrocarbons.

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Volunteer Outreach Opportunities

WHA Garden Expo, Feb. 12 – 14

Mid February – when often cabin fever and a longing for spring sets in. While Mother Nature may not fulfill your wishes for green in winter, the WHA Garden Expo can – and does (<http://www.wigardenexpo.com>). At a time when gardeners start thinking about the year’s plantings, the Garden Expo provides a throng of exhibitors and presentations to set you on the path to lush greenery.

It should come as no surprise that an audience attuned to the outdoors

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Chair’s Corner

by Dave Blouin

I look forward to winter each year as it’s a natural time to reflect while looking forward to the promise of a coming new year. 2015 was busier than ever for the Four Lakes Group with dedicated volunteers helping with education and outreach on local water, energy issues and more. 2016 will be just as busy and productive and our success depends on member volunteers who generously give their time and energy. I want to thank you for all that you do to help us in our shared mission to explore, enjoy, and protect the planet.

We hosted the annual statewide Autumn Assembly in October and were very pleased with the big turnout and enthusiastic response to the speakers and programs at the event. It was a major undertaking by both volunteers and Chapter staff and I want to extend thanks to everyone who helped and also those who attended. The Assembly works to both train us on how to work more effectively and also to motivate us to do more on our campaigns and goals. The responses we received at the event itself and afterwards indicate that we were effective in meeting these goals.

A number of Four Lakes Group members and others recently attended a fantastic Outings Leadership training in Madison. Eric Uram, JMC Club leader and Sierra Club Outdoors – National Volunteer Leader led us through these trainings to certify members to lead area Outings. The trainings were fun and informative and will lead to even more outings designed to get both members and the public out to explore the outdoors and learn about issues and concerns we face. The roots of the Sierra Club historically rest within Outings – in fact

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Tar Sands – Just say NO!

Dane County Board Picks on Huge Corporation

After the state legislature, through some unexplained coincidence, passed a law denying counties (e.g. Dane County) the right to require added environmental impact liability insurance of Enbridge as they planned to increase the flow of toxic tar sands bitumen through line 61 to 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd), Enbridge still petitioned the Dane County Board of Supervisors to remove the requirement (even though it can't currently be enforced).

This issue was brought up at the December 3rd Dane County Board meeting. Enbridge worried that should the state legislature change (and come to their senses (my words)) and rescind the restrictive state law, the Dane County insurance requirement would again be valid. Enbridge also claimed the \$25 million insurance requirement would pose a financial hardship to them – as a \$42 billion company that is paying \$45 million just to upgrade one of their 12 pump stations in Wisconsin. (Enbridge would only pay the insurance premium. You do the math.)

Having little sympathy for Enbridge's protestations that the requirement was now illegal and needed to be removed, and their claims of hardship, the Board upheld the Zoning and Land Regulation Committee's Conditional Use Permit requirement by a resounding 27-2 vote. While this should end this saga, we anticipate Enbridge can't take "NO" for an answer, and will challenge this in court. Stay tuned.

A New Line?

Did you hear the one about too much is still not enough? One reason for Enbridge's continued pursuit of this issue is an added specter hiding behind the door – or should we say pipeline. Enbridge is proposing another pipeline in the same corridor, presumably with the same 1.2 million bpd capacity to export even more toxic, climate-damaging tar sands out of Canada. They claim it will benefit us, but even the line 61 expansion was for overseas export. Jobs? Not that many. Risks? Line 61 will have over 6 times the capacity of the line that caused a \$1.2 billion spill in Michigan. So why not double that risk again?

The Paris climate accord made clear we need to move off fossil fuels rapidly. How would an added 18.4 billion gallons per year oil pipeline fit with that? James Hansen said it would be game over for climate change by adding the Keystone XL pipeline at 830,000 bpd. Enbridge's expansion of line 61 and planned line 66 would be nearly 2.5 times that amount. And this at a time too when the price of a barrel of oil has dropped precipitously (tar sands oil is very costly), and concern over fossil fuel investments is high.

Again, NO!

If you care about climate change and our future, this must be stopped. We need your help to just say "NO" to Enbridge again (and again if need be). Dedicated activists in the Sierra Club, 350 Madison, and the statewide WiSE (Wisconsin Safe Energy) Alliance have been banding together to stop line 66. Elizabeth Ward has devoted considerable time to this effort, and we, along with 350 Madison, are supporting a coordinator position to carry this fight forward. To get more involved and help cork in this pipeline, please contact Elizabeth or Don Ferber.



Enbridge Octopus being reigned in

Autumn Assembly – A Great Success

We planned and planned – and in the end, it was all worth it. We had a tremendously positive response from attendees at the Autumn Assembly October 2-4 at the Perlstein Resort in the Wisconsin Dells. We had wonderful speakers, highlighted by Mike McCabe, James Mills and Scott Wittkopf, all not only presenting on key Sierra Club issues, but also providing interactive workshops. The 87 attendees were hardly given an opportunity to slow down as one great presentation followed another. But we did find time for a silent auction, bird hike, awards, and an evening campfire complete with fresh popcorn from an old style popper.

The Four Lakes Group was well represented in the awards. Tia Nelson (daughter of Gaylord) won the Torch-bearer award for her enduring dedication to environmental causes. The WiSE (Wisconsin Safe Energy) Alliance, of which the John Muir Chapter is a part, won an award for their tar sands pipeline work and opposition. And two of our long-term leaders won awards. Lacinda Athen received the Wildflower Award for her wonderful communications and web site work. And our own Four Lakes Group Chair, Dave Blouin, received the JJ Doc Werner award for his many years of outstanding service to the chapter, especially in his roles as State Mining Chair and State Political Chair. Next time you see any of these people, congratulate them on their well-deserved awards.

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Winter-Spring 2016 outings

For all outings, wear weather and activity appropriate clothing, and good footwear. For work outings, wear work clothes and gloves. Bring fluids to drink, and a snack or food, and sunscreen, a hat, and insect repellent if needed. If carpooling, please be a little early. Please contact the leader to RSVP, if you have questions, or with concerns about weather or to cancel. Check the Four Lakes Group web site or Facebook page for updates or added events.

Leader Contact Info

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Fred Wollenburg, wollenburgf@gmail.com

Thursday, January 21, 6:15 pm – Full Moon Ski/Snowshoe/Hike Prairie Moraine County Park

Enjoy a full moon winter evening ski/snowshoe/hike at Prairie Moraine County Park southeast of Verona. We'll ski/snowshoe or hike through prairies and woods where you can enjoy Dane County's most visible section of the glacial terminal moraine and learn about glacial geology and restoring native habitats on a (hopefully!) full moon night. Families welcome! Take Hwy 18/151 sw of Madison to exit 79 (Cty PB). Turn left on PB and go .7 miles south to Prairie Moraine parking lot on the left. Meet by the Trail kiosk. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

Saturday March 19, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm – John Muir County Park Restoration

Help cut invasive brush at John Muir County Park and restore his boyhood home to its native habitat. Learn what Muir saw in the land and how we can and are restoring it to the time Muir was there. Bring loppers and wear gloves and work clothes and shoes and bring fluids and a lunch. Hike or continue restoration work after lunch. From Madison, take Hwy 51 north to Hwy 22 and continue north to Cty O in Marquette County. Go left on Cty O to Cty F, and turn right for 1.5 miles to John Muir Park. Contact Fred Wollenburg for added info or Don Ferber for carpooling.

Saturday, April 2, 10 am – Spring Hike, New Glarus Woods

Join David as he leads his annual 4–5 mile hike through prairies and forests at New Glarus Woods State Park. The hike is moderate with rolling hills and ravines and a great opportunity to observe and learn about spring ephemerals and succession as they start to bloom and trees bud out.

To carpool meet Dave at 9:15 am at the Verona Park & Ride, Hwy PB and Verona Rd. Otherwise, meet at New Glarus Woods State Park parking lot off State Hwy 69, 2 miles south of New Glarus.

Saturday, April 16, 10 am - 2:30 pm – John Muir Birthday Party

A day to celebrate and learn about John Muir and his heritage with the Sierra Club.

10 am - noon – Earth Day clean up John Muir Cty Park
Noon - 1 pm – Bring a picnic lunch, or if weather is bad, visit the Muir Exhibit at 55 Montello St., Montello, or have a relaxing and delicious lunch at one of several restaurants in Montello. Birthday Cake and Social.
1 - 2:30 pm – Hike John Muir Park, Ice Age Trail
See March 19 for directions. Contact Don Ferber for more info or carpooling.

May 17, 6:30 pm – Evening Hike, Verona Segment Ice Age Trail

Join us for an easy 4 mile hike through mostly prairie on the Ice Age Trail. We'll walk out and back with an added option. If the weather cooperates, we'll hike under lovely moonlight.

You'll learn about native prairie plants and spring woodland blooms and their timing. Take Hwy PD (McKee Rd) west of Verona Rd toward Hwy M. Park on the left near the top of the hill just past the High Point Rd stoplight. Bring a flashlight or headlamp.

Streambank Restoration - Dates and locations to be determined

We'll have winter/spring streambank restoration outings with Trout Unlimited, but dates/locations are not set yet. Contact Don Ferber or watch our web site for more info.

Cruisin' for Cuisine

Cruisin is a casual dinner group that meets monthly at a locally owned Madison area restaurant. We order off the menu, everyone gets their own check, and non-members are welcome to join us. This Spring's selection includes some new spots on the Madison dining scene, so we hope you will join us! Please RSVP to Lacinda at lacinda.athen@gmail.com or 608-274-7870 at least 2 days prior to dinner for the meeting time.

Thursday, January 28 - **Estrellon**. 313 W Johnson St, Madison www.estrellonrestaurant.com

Wednesday, February 17 - **Cafe Hollander**. 726 N Midvale Blvd, Madison www.cafehollander.com

Wednesday, March 16 - **Graft**. 18 N Carroll St, Madison www.graftmadison.com

Thursday, April 20 - **Nile Restaurant**. 6119 Odana Rd, Madison www.nilemadison.com

RePowering Madison - continued from page 1

When the crowd was asked if they wanted 85% of their electricity from fossil fuels, a resounding “NO” was the answer. MGE’s long-term contracts on two coal power plants that provide up to 70% of their electric power pose a major challenge to a clean energy future.

Indeed, our entire state is heavily dependent on extracted energy. Over half of our electricity comes from coal, and a similar 85% from all fossil fuels. Wisconsin currently has an oversupply of dirty fuel power, and now Alliant Energy is proposing to build a new large natural gas power plant in Beloit. In addition, Wisconsin’s 10% renewable energy standard is now lagging far behind many other states.

Where we’re at

MGE’s facilitator, Justice & Sustainability Associates (JSA), used small group community conversations to obtain feedback on our energy future. Despite the community not having seen the meeting results, MGE released an Energy 2030 Framework regarding future directions. (Available on mge.com.) Proposals to achieve 25% renewables by 2025 and 30% by 2030 and a 40% CO2 reduction by 2030 (from 2005 levels), are a step in the right direction. Of note is that 20% of the CO2 reduction has already been achieved.

MGE also promised no new fixed rate hikes and to give customers more control over their energy bills. This is welcome news, since the mandatory fee hike in 2015 reduced customer control over energy bills. MGE also aims to reduce costs and energy use, and to use new technology and programs to benefit all customers.

The Community Energy Conversation’s report is now available for the community to review and assess how MGE’s Framework reflects customer feedback. The next major step is a Community Workshop with ~ 300 participants anticipated in April representing various community perspectives. Beyond that, a Community Partnership is planned to arrive at a rate case proposal to be submitted to the Public Service Commission.

Where next?

Does this framework fit our community values, and also climate change concerns? MGE’s proposal is fairly consistent with EPA’s Clean Power Plan on Wisconsin power plant emissions. While forward looking, many utilities and communities elsewhere are doing far more. California and New York have set 50% renewable goals by 2030. Plus, MGE mentions equity, but we hope new rate structures will be developed that incentivize solar and energy efficiency, and do not unfairly burden low energy use and income customers.

Whether this is adequate to meet the challenges of climate change is another matter. The Paris accord goal to limit temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius (we’re at 1 degree now), and the accepted 80% CO2 reduction by 2050, MGE’s proposed 20% in 15 years, leaves a burdensome 40% reduction in the subsequent 20 years. It also depends if 40% pertains just to electric power, or includes heating - a much more laudable goal.

As Sierrans who’s Beyond Coal campaign that helped shutter or prevent 200 coal power plants in the last decade, we need to shut down all our coal power plants in Wisconsin. Letters to the editor should state that it’s time for Wisconsin utilities to move to a brighter and more sustainable future for our families and our planet.

If MGE is your utility, tell CEO Gary Wolter (gwolter@mge.com) that our community values clean energy, not coal or other fossil fuels. We want incentives for clean energy, and rates that provide energy justice for all. Ask your friends, neighbors or community groups you are part of to offer their perspectives. Some may be at the Community Workshop. Make sure your views are represented. Watch RePowerMadison.org or Facebook page for updates.

Our message to utilities is that fossil fuels belong in the ground. It is solar panels and wind turbines that belong in the air, not more CO2. To get more involved or take action, contact Don Ferber at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net.

Arcadia Power

You may have received a post card from Arcadia Power inviting you to sign up for renewable energy. What’s the story? Is it a good deal and something you should do? Basically, it’s a way of buying renewable wind energy credits that help support additional renewable energy production. The cost you pay is an additional 1.5¢/KwH, so the total would depend on your electric use. By comparison, MGE Green Power Tomorrow customers add 2.3¢/KwH, or Alliant Energy Second Nature customers add 2¢/KwH. If you sign up, Arcadia adds their renewable energy charge, and you pay the one bill.

A key issue, whether you pay the surcharge to a utility or to Arcadia Power, is if the surcharge actually results in additional clean energy production. That may vary by utility, although adding renewable generation was part of the original intent of these programs. However, the Sierra Club has partnered with Arcadia power to offer it to people who want this option.

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Arcadia Power – continued from page 4

John Muir Chapter Solar Program

If you're really serious about clean, renewable energy, you have a great option that also supports the John Muir Chapter. The Chapter has partnered with H&H Solar to enable Wisconsinites interested in generating zero emission energy to get a free solar evaluation. You then get a discount as part of our buying group if you decide to have a system installed. In addition, H&H makes a donation to the Chapter as well, so it's a win-win for the environment. For more about this program and how to get your own solar system, go to the solar link at <http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/>.

You and the Chapter will be glad you did!

Autumn Assembly – continued from page 2

Next year's Assembly site is yet to be determined, but the staff will take on more of the administrative duties, including the location. So while some unknowns exist, the Four Lakes Group set a strong standard to build on as we move forward. It wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our great staff and volunteers, and those who came. If you missed this year's AA, don't miss next years and the opportunity for you to connect with great leaders and other fellow Sierrans.

Four Lakes Group Sierra Club Contacts

On the web: [www. http://4lakes.org](http://www.4lakes.org)

Like us on Facebook

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Climate Action Planning

Federal and State

In addition to the Paris accord and limiting climate-changing emissions, what else will reduce energy use and stimulate clean energy? At the federal level, the Environmental Protection Agency created the Clean Power Plan to reduce emissions from power plants ~ 32% nationally by 2030. The Obama administration also increased fuel economy standards for cars and light trucks to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. Higher standards are also proposed for heavy-duty trucks.

As part of the budget deal, federal tax credits were renewed for solar and wind, and additional investment in clean energy technologies will accelerate their adoption. However, lifting the ban on crude oil exports is a step in the wrong direction, although hopefully will be more than offset by clean energy advances.

Wisconsin unfortunately is one of the states suing to stop the EPA Clean Power Plan, and is steadily cutting back an effective Focus on Energy program to promote energy efficiency and solar. Wisconsin also has not set a new renewable energy standard since the original 10% goal, and is lagging far behind other states.

Local Action

However, it's at the local level where the potential lies to have the most direct impact as individuals. The City of Madison's Sustainability Committee has proposed an Energy Work Plan that includes 25% renewable energy by 2025, 50% energy reduction by 2030, and an 80% reduction in CO2 by 2050. Further initiatives in the plan include hiring a high level position in the Mayor's office to focus on climate change, and working together with the community on programs to implement the plan's objectives. In addition, the cities of Fitchburg, Middleton and Monona have all undertaken initiatives to add new clean energy sources and reduce their carbon footprint.

Dane County offers another opportunity to take strong action. With the Capital Region Advocacy Network for Environmental Sustainability's (CRANES, which the Four Lakes Group has partnered with) leadership, the county allocated funds to do a greenhouse gas inventory and establish measurements and a baseline for emissions. With added strong support, the County Board of Supervisors voted funds to create a Climate Action Plan in 2016. With strong community support, Dane County can set true leadership standards for needed CO2 reductions. Please let your County Board Supervisor know you want a strong Climate Action Plan that addresses the true threat of climate change.

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Climate Action Planning *Continued from page 5*

Whatever community you live in, the time is now to address greenhouse gas emissions, reduce energy use and move to clean energy. For assistance on efforts in your community, please contact Don Ferber at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net. And when elections come up ask candidates how they will help create a sustainable future for those here now and generations yet to come.

Outreach opportunities *continued from page 1*

would be interested in the Sierra Club. Probably the best crowd we encounter all year, the Garden Expo provides terrific opportunities to educate people about the Sierra Club, engage in many wonderful conversations, and sell merchandise.

That's where you come in. We need a lot of volunteers to staff our busy booth that weekend. No experience required, only an interest in the Sierra Club and our issues and activities – and a willingness to talk with people. Plus, volunteering gets you in free all weekend to see the exhibits and attend many wonderful talks. Sign up is simple. Just go to <http://vols.pt/Jmcyx6> and sign up for one or more shifts of your choice. Questions? Contact Don Ferber at 608-222-9376 or d_ferber@sbcglobal.net.

Canoecopia, March 11 – 13

Three days of heaven for watersports enthusiasts. The universe's biggest paddle sports expo occurs at the time waterways open up for canoes and kayaks. Canoecopia (<http://www.canoecopia.com>) attracts vendors and many noted experts from far and wide, and is a magnet for watersports lovers.

The Sierra Club will again be there in force to promote our outings, talk to people who love the outdoors about how also to protect it, and joining us to support what they value. Volunteers get into the show free and have the opportunity to see and talk with vendors and listen to many fascinating travel adventures and find new places to add to their bucket list. For more info and to sign up, contact Eric Uram at eric.uran@headwater.us.

Water Sentinels - Your waters need you!

by Liz Wessel

Our local fresh waters make Madison and surrounding communities and counties a great place to live. We have world-class trout streams to fish in, and lakes and rivers to paddle on. We have groundwater for drinking and for sustaining businesses. Many of the decisions each of us make, in addition to those of our local governments, developers and businesses and activities, can impact our water resources.

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Chair's Corner - continued from page 1

the Club was formed as the result of an Outing – and we want to continue and grow this tradition. Look for area Outings on page 3 and contact Outings Chair Kathy Mulbrandon for more info on how to become an Outings leader.

We have many activities early this year we hope will interest members. This newsletter includes details on great hiking and education outings, along with opportunities to volunteer. Our annual Volunteer Appreciation event is scheduled for Wednesday, February 24 at the Brocach Tavern in downtown Madison. This fun event gives us a chance to recognize our volunteers in a great setting with good food and drink, plus discuss plans for our 2016 issue and education campaigns. Please see page 8 for details.

I hardly need to remind anyone that 2016 is also a major election year for local, state and federal elections and members interested in Sierra Club involvement in the political process are invited to help out by joining our Political Committee. The Sierra Club endorsement is an important honor sought after by many candidates and only those who are strong advocates for the environment will receive Sierra Club approval. Once endorsed, we work to help elect these candidates so they can make a difference in public policy. Please contact me if you're interested.

The work on MGE's rates and energy policies has continued forward, and our stalwart Conservation Chair, Don Ferber, continues to help lead the effort to provide fair rates and clean energy to local MGE utility users. Much more work remains to be done, and the Four Lakes Group supplies volunteers and funding to support RePower Madison's work. Volunteers can help by contacting Don and working together with RePower. See page 4 for details and contact info.

Our Water Sentinels program continues as one of our most successful volunteer efforts. The Water Sentinels volunteer team is working to learn more about our local water resources and how to protect them. The team will be working to help educate us about threats posed to our water resources by environmental degradation along with ways for us to protect these resources. Look for an update on their activities on page X.

Please take time to fill out your election ballot for Executive Committee members on page 7. The ballot includes two returning Committee members (Don Ferber and Erik Petterson) along with a new candidate, Liz Wessel. You may also write in candidates.

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Four Lakes Group 2016 Executive Committee Election Ballot

Please read the candidate statements for election to the Executive Committee and select your choices by putting an “X” before the name. Select up to three candidates. If your ballot is not from a Four Lakes Sierran mailed copy, please write your membership number on the back. Only ballots with active membership numbers will be valid, so please ensure that you cut the portion of the back page with your name and number on it.

Voter 1: Don Ferber Erik Pettersen Liz Wessel

Write In _____

Voter 2: Don Ferber Erik Pettersen Liz Wessel

Write In _____

Four Lakes Executive Committee Ballot Statements

Don Ferber

I enjoy the outdoors, especially restoration efforts and biking. I am deeply troubled by our disregard for nature and the impending threat of climate change, and want to pass along a habitable planet with all its natural splendors to future generations to enjoy as well. I like working with the Sierra Club because of their strong support for volunteers and opportunities to engage on many important environmental issues. Working with other Beyond Coal Campaign staff and volunteers to stop coal is something I've taken great pride in.

One of my goals is to educate other people regarding our issues and provide opportunities for them to get involved. I often act as a liaison to other environmental organizations such as 350 Madison and RePower Madison to provide support and combine our efforts. I hope to continue my leadership and involvement in the Sierra Club and Four Lakes Group since there is much more still to do.

Erik Pettersen

I've been an environmentalist for most of my life and recently have gotten more into volunteering at the Sierra Club. I canvassed all over south central Wisconsin for Greenpeace in the early nineties and have worked on various political campaigns, most notably, Ralph Nader's run for the presidency in 1996. I was given (in October, 2013) the Community Shares “Backyard Heroes Award” for my volunteering contributions to the Sierra Club. I was the treasurer of Madison Community Cooperative for six months and also the treasurer of Emma Goldman Coop, too, for 3 years. I rely on mass transportation as much as possible and don't plan on owning a car anytime soon. I look forward to helping as an assistant to the treasurer for the Four Lakes Group and to remaining a member of the Executive Committee.

Liz Wessel

Liz Wessel owns Green Concierge Travel, a business that merges two passions fundamental to the Sierra Club – outdoor recreation and environmental activism. Her top environmental issue is reducing transportation's contribution to climate change. As a Pollution Prevention Specialist for Citizens for a Better Environment, Liz worked on programs to clean up the lithographic printing, dry cleaning and auto industries. She also served as the Executive Director of Clean Wisconsin. Liz's community involvement dates back to the 1990's when she judged nominations for the Wisconsin Governor's Award for Excellence in Hazardous Waste Reduction. She has also served on the board of Community Shares of Wisconsin, the City of Madison's Commission on the Environment, the board of Green America (previously Co-op America) and the board of the State Environmental Leadership Program. Liz and her husband Bill became life members of the Sierra Club in 1984. They enjoy berry picking, fly-fishing, picnicking and hiking together.

Chair's Corner - continued from page 6

Committee members are volunteer leaders who serve as administrators of our finances and resources while setting our policy and advocacy goals. We're always looking for more interested members considering working from the inside to keep the Group vital, active, and involved.

Please contact me if you're interested in taking a more active role with the Group. There are myriad ways you can help that don't involve a lot of time or resources. And as always, please give me a shout if you have any questions or concerns. See you on the trails!



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<http://4lakes.org>

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Newsletter Mailing

Our goal is environmentally friendly, cost effective communication with our members. Our primary modes of communication are this newsletter, the Four Lakes Enews and our web site. We mail a hard copy if we don't have your email or you request it. Others receive an email letting you know when the newsletter is available for downloading. Please consider sending your email to d_ferber@sbcglobal.net if we don't have it to save the cost and paper of mailings. Plus we can also send you our Enews to keep you better informed.

Water Sentinels – continued from page 6

The Water Sentinels uses activities and outings to learn more about who uses water, who relies on water, and the importance of freshwater to our quality of life and recreation. Look in the events and outings section of the Four Lakes website for Water Sentinels specific outings. We hope to connect more Sierra Club outings to local issues that impact our waters.

In 2016, we will assemble water education kits targeted at two children's age groups. We will also explore the potential impacts of Enbridge line 61 and its proposed expansion on our surface and groundwater resources.

We also encourage you to enter the Our Waters Our Future Writing Contest, which seeks short stories reflecting positive futures for water and people in the Yahara Watershed counties – Dane, Rock, or Columbia. The winning story will be published in Madison Magazine; the deadline is Feb. 1, 2016. Details are at: <https://wsc.limnology.wisc.edu/writing-contest>.

For more info, to contribute an event or outing idea, or to get involved, contact: Liz Wessel, 608.238.9934 or lizmwessel@gmail.com or Cindy Rose, 608.271.6440, crose5@att.net. The Water Sentinel Team is a joint project of the Sierra Club Four Lakes Group and the First Unitarian Society of Madison.

Volunteer Appreciation Party

Wednesday, February 24, 5:30 – 8:30 pm
Brocach, 7 W Main St, Madison

Despite the state of the state we live in, we have much to celebrate. Not only have we had some victories on important issues, but we have many dedicated volunteers and supporters to thank. We'll gather to do just that at our frequent celebratory spot, Brocach Tavern on the Capitol Square. We'll provide food and some refreshment and invite you to come and provide good cheer.

Whether you've volunteered or not, as a Sierra Club member or backer, you provide support for our efforts and our volunteers, and your presence will help propel our efforts forward. But it's also an opportunity to learn more about our activities and how you can get involved or provide further support to help accomplish the goals we strive together towards as fellow Sierrans. Please mark your calendars for this event on February 24, and sign up at <http://bit.ly/1YiR5dw>. Contact Beverly Speer at bjsmadison62@gmail.com if you have questions.

***** Join us! *****