

Chesapeake

Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club

Winter 2011-2012

The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

Out of the City, Into the Woods



By Nicole Veltre-Luton—"I feel like I can do anything!" were the words out of Delon Blanding's mouth after the Digital Harbor High School junior reached the lookout at the top of the Overlook Cliff Trail in Harper's Ferry, WV. Blanding was part of a group of 14 youth and adult leaders from Baltimore Inner City Outings (BICO), a non-profit volunteer organization that has been taking inner city kids outdoors since 1999. Others on the hike had similar reactions. "I am inspired!" exclaimed Shaquille Brooks, a freshman "It was worth it." said Kevin Violenus, another freshman from the school. The group had voted unanimously to tackle the steep cliff trail ascent rather than the easier C & O Canal trail. "Maybe we can do that next time," was the sentiment shared by all as they looked down at the waters of the Potomac and Shenandoah coming together at Harper's Ferry. Certified outing leader and BICO student alumnae Tiara Barnes had this to say in a social

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Weeds, Waste, and Watersheds

Why we volunteer and what we have to show for it

By Marta Vogel—"The Aliens Among Us" piqued Carolyn Puckett's interest. An enthusiastic gardener for 20 years, a self-professed nature lover, and a member of the Maryland Native Plant Society, she attended the workshop and raised her hand to volunteer to train others to eradicate aliens. And no, we're not talking about anti-environmentalists; we're talking weeds—mile-a-minute, multiflora rose, honeysuckle, and the ill-named tree of heaven, a.k.a China-sumac or varnish tree—all of which, like sprawl development, spread quickly, consume nutrients and space, and leave native plants (and animals) starving.

In 2009, Puckett planned on retiring as a senior research analyst at the Social Security Administration at Woodlawn. Her husband died in 2008 and she reached out to several organizations, including the Carroll County Master Gardeners, the Audubon Society of Central Maryland, the Sierra Club and the Carroll County Forest Conservancy District Board.

On a mission to start an army of Weed Warriors in Carroll County parks, she ran into barriers.

"The biggest challenge was getting the county to agree," says Puckett. "They were down to one naturalist because of cutbacks."

Undaunted, Puckett's plea became: "All you have to do is open the tool shed; it's not going to impact your staff time."

Six months after the Lead Warrior began knock

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Once a Tree Hugger, Always a Tree Hugger

By Janis Oppelt—When I was 10, I became good friends with a large tree in our backyard. I no longer recall what kind of tree. I only knew that it was bigger than me, and I felt protected when I sat underneath it to think 10-year-old thoughts and simply enjoy the outside world. And, yes, here it comes: I did give the tree a hug when I needed one.

Most trees are still bigger than me, and I still feel protected when I am around them. The big difference now—50 years later—is that I feel a need to protect *them*, and the rest of the natural environment, from *us*. (Exceptions to this feeling are cockroaches, stink bugs, and mosquitoes. My husband Russ would add squirrels to this list.)

Like others who live in urban areas, I hear and see assaults on the natural environment I love every day: fire and police sirens that disturb bird song; bulldozers that destroy trees and land so that we can have more roads and buildings; and, of course, the untrustworthy who say more development will not cause more traffic—and, they say, they have the statistics to prove it!

Do I feel that I alone can do anything to stop these rackets? No, I do not. But, as we all have seen, many like-minded people working together for positive change can, indeed, "fight City Hall" (or some semblance of this cliché). Sometimes these fighters even win or at least change the odds of losing everything we, as lovers of the environment, hold near and dear.

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are generally aligned with those of the environmental community in Maryland, but are strictly those of the authors and not necessarily official policy of local, state or national Sierra Club entities. The Sierra Club prides itself on being a grassroots volunteer organization. The concerns and opinions of all its members are welcome in these pages.

Letter from the Chair



Bonnie Bick, Chapter Chair

What an interesting, jam-packed, tiring and wonderful year 2011 has been! Our significant accomplishments in diverse areas give us cause to be proud.

The Southern Maryland Group recently realized a significant victory: the Maryland Department of the Environment deeded the land to construct the Waldorf Bypass (Cross County Connector). Kudos are due to the group; the Maryland Chapter's campaign to "Save the Mattawoman Creek;" the Mattawoman Watershed Society and several other local conservation groups whose work was foundational to the success of the campaign; and especially to Ms. Bonnie Bick, whose many years of effort were recognized in her well-deserved receipt of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's 2011 Environmentalist of the Year Award.

Our Clean Water campaign, awarded grant funds by private foundations, has held several successful forums that will set the stage to continue a meaningful and much needed thrust in Bay restoration. And our Beyond Coal campaign is flourishing; the national Sierra Club has recognized and rewarded us with grant funds.

The biennial Jamboree in the Catoctins was a wonderful getaway for all who participated. Michael Brune, National Sierra Club Executive Director, delivered an inspiring keynote speech, and the enthusiasm of the evening carried through the workshops and fun that the weekend provided.

Thanks to everyone—our hard-working staff, the dedicated members of the executive committee and conservation committee, the creative members of the Jamboree committee, the fundraising committee, and all the other volunteers and members whose commitment and financial support make our successes possible.

As you thumb through this issue of Chesapeake, you'll notice that we are spotlighting volunteerism and some of the many reasons that Sierrans in Maryland choose to volunteer with the chapter. Recently, our very own Chesapeake newsletter editor broached this topic with me by asking how I came to be so deeply involved in Sierra Club environmental activism and advocacy and asked that I share my story.

As far back as I can remember (and that's been a long time now!) I have always loved being outdoors and being involved in natural surroundings. I lived my formative years mostly in rural settings as a dairy farm lad. I loved working with animals, field work, gardening,

"orcharding," and just being outdoors in nature. I learned much from this life experience and it is still a guiding part of me.

My maternal grandmother was a half-blood Cherokee, and although she was never taught those traditions—it was a social stigma during my great grandmother's lifetime—I learned by observation how she honored things in nature, creation and creator, as I helped her in gardening, berry picking, jelly making, canning, and preserving.

I always was curious about the Native American background, but I never took the time to investigate it until after she passed on at the age of 101. An "empty nest" left me with more available time, and it was then that I felt a "spiritual call" to learn more about that part of my heritage. And so I took a three year apprenticeship with a Native American Grandmother (Elder) from the state of Washington.

The many groups she has taught over a period of over twenty years formed the Buffalo Trace Society, of which I have been a part for over 15 years. I am a Native American teacher, healing pipe carrier, fire keeper, sweat lodge leader (water pourer) and Vision Quest leader in this group (Chippewa tradition). I am also a member of the Appalachian Nation Cherokee (a non-federated group of part-blood Cherokees) and am learning those traditions.

During my personal Vision Quest, an individual spiritual retreat in a wilderness setting, I received direction to combine Native American traditions and teachings with environmental activism and advocacy.

For years I had volunteered with organizations involving my children. I led Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, coached soccer and softball, and presided at our local PTA. And I had long been environmentally oriented, with early-on trash recycling, and charitable contributions to many environmental groups.

So several things came together for me at about the same time—nearing the latter years of a 42-year career as an engineer/scientist with the Department of the Army, "empty nest" family time, my Native American involvement and direction, and recognition by both me and my spouse that I needed a focus after retirement because I had always been deeply involved and highly energetic in my endeavors.

Well, lo and behold, I noted an advertisement for a meeting of the Greater Baltimore Group (GBG) of the MD Chapter Sierra Club. The chair of the group was trying to rebuild the group, particularly in Harford County. I became the Harford County representative

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The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

It's Time to Vote for the Maryland Chapter Executive Committee

This issue of *Chesapeake* includes the ballot for electing at-large members of the executive committee of the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The Sierra Club is a grassroots environmental organization that elects its own volunteer leadership from among its members. Every member is entitled to vote and to run for leadership positions in the club. The executive committee (excom) runs the chapter and determines the chapter's policies and responses to the many environmental challenges we face in Maryland. In addition to developing

and supporting our legislative agenda, setting priorities for conservation campaigns, and facilitating communication between the chapter and the groups, the excom faces the challenge of achieving fiscal stability despite rising operational costs and a reduction in funds from the national club.

The excom comprises six at-large members elected by the Maryland membership, and one delegate from each of our nine groups. At-large members are elected for two-year terms. Three of the six at-large positions are up for election

each year. The executive committee elects the chapter chair and other officers from its own ranks.

This is your chance to choose the people who will lead the chapter through the next year. Please read the candidates' statements, complete the ballot, and mail it to the chapter office at this address:

Elections Committee
Maryland Chapter/Sierra Club
7338 Baltimore Ave, Suite 111
College Park, Maryland 20740

The excom meets in person six times a year on the third Saturday of every odd month, and by scheduled teleconference in the even months. Those elected will take their position at the January 21, 2012, meeting. Ballots are due in the office by January 9, 2012.

Please read the candidates' statements carefully and vote in this election for members-at-large for the executive committee of your Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Ballot appears on page 27.

Candidates for Maryland Chapter Executive Committee

David O'Leary



I am running for re-election for a third two year term on the chapter executive committee. Since moving to Maryland in the fall of 2005, my involvement in chapter activities includes service as the Cool Cities Campaign Chair from the spring of 2006 through the spring of 2008, when I became conservation chair. I've continued in this role and increased my commitment by serving as chapter vice-chair since January, 2009. I helped to form our current legislative committee and energy team. I've actively advocated for many Sierra Club positions in Annapolis and on Capitol Hill, and coached others on Maryland's legislative process. As a member of the chapter's staff oversight committee, I work closely with the chapter staff on an almost daily basis on a wide

range of issues from office operations and grant writing to conservation campaign planning and execution. I participated in the hiring process for our three conservation organizers and the new chapter director.

In 2008-09, I served on a national energy policy committee, and I am currently serving on a national task force on chapter-national relations. Prior to moving to Maryland in the fall of 2005, I was active with the New Jersey Chapter, serving as a local group conservation chair and group outings chair.

Over the last few years as a member of the chapter executive committee, I have participated in and supported local group activities across the state, from the Eastern Shore to southern Maryland to Garrett County. One of my priorities for the upcoming term is to increase the focus on understanding and supporting local initiatives throughout the state, while maintaining awareness and seeking alignment with national campaign priorities, including Beyond Coal. I look forward to working with our new chapter director to continue our progress in increasing the effectiveness of the Maryland Chapter through broader member and activist involvement.

My other activities include planning and conducting Leave No Trace training courses for Boy Scout leaders across the northeast, and too infrequent backpacking and canoe trips. Professionally, I provide strategic planning and other business development services for technology

companies, especially focusing on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and waste reduction/materials efficiency.

I would appreciate your vote. Please feel free to contact me with questions or suggestions at 301-580-8673 or by email to dave.oleary@mdsierra.org.

Karen Moody



Hi, I'm Karen Moody, and I'm running for a position on the Maryland Chapter Executive Committee. I am currently the outings chair for the Catocin Group, and I lead at least one outing a month in our region (second Saturday of every month,

please join us!). I am an avid hiker, and I love sharing the diversity of habitats our state has to offer. I am firmly convinced that advocacy starts with an appreciation of what natural resources we have.

If elected, I intend to support ongoing efforts to get people out to areas that are in need of protection, so we can increase our membership and get more people invested in our conservation work. I am interested in supporting the Sierra Club on an organizational level as well, and was a member of the Jamboree planning committee this year. I am also directly committed to advocacy work, and have experience working with permit review, state and local governments, non-profit organizations, and citizens through my former job with the protected species section of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. I currently

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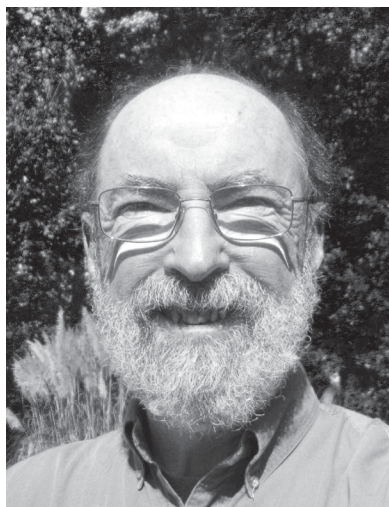
Candidates for Maryland Chapter Executive Committee

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Karen Moody (cont.)

teach biology and environmental science at Carroll and Harford Community Colleges, where I involve my students in study and conservation of our local habitats through semester-long projects and outings. I'd like to continue putting those skills to work for the Sierra Club at the state level. Thanks for your vote!

Don Grace



Don Grace is retired from a 33-year career with the United States Government Department of the Army and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Don worked for Pennsylvania Congressman Joseph Hoeffel as a Congressional Fellow for two years during the 106th Congress, specializing in legislative issues related to land use, including Housing, Transportation, Energy, Agriculture, and the Environment. Active in his former community in Montgomery County, Maryland, Don was president of the Calverton Citizens Association for five terms, was a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee engaged in writing the Master Plan for Eastern Montgomery County and was Chairman of the East County Citizens Advisory Board.

An active outdoorsman, Don was a

Field Team Leader for the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference and a training officer for the wilderness search and rescue team based at the University of Maryland. After Don retired from his federal career in February, 2003, he hiked 1,350 miles of the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to New York. In 2004, Don and his wife, Nancy Smith, moved to the Eastern Shore of Maryland and reside in Bishopville, Maryland. From 2005 to 2008, Don served as President of Habitat for Humanity of Worcester County, Maryland and was a member of the Worcester County Task Force on Workforce Housing. He has represented the Eastern Shore Group on the Maryland Sierra Club Executive Committee since 2009.

Ron Henry



Although I have been an environmental advocate for many years, I did not formally join Sierra Club until 2001, and I became a Life Member in 2006. I served in the Sierra Club as the Harford County representative on the Greater Baltimore Group (GBG) Executive Committee from 2001-2004. In 2004 I accepted the chair of GBG and served in that role from July 2004 - July 2008. During this timeframe I was active with Maryland Chapter as both GBG Chair/ Delegate and in 2007 also served as chapter vice-chair.

In 2008, I accepted the nomination as chair, Maryland Chapter Sierra Club and have served in that capacity since then. During this timeframe as chapter chair, I have been blessed with having an energetic, caring and hard-working executive and conservation committees, staff and many volunteers.

This resulted in team efforts that have enabled the MD Chapter to realize significant environmental victories such as the recent ruling by MDE denying the permit for the Cross County Connector in Waldorf, MD. Thus, "Saving Mattawoman Creek" became a reality earned from many years of effort from several area conservation groups; our support and a two-year chapter campaign to achieve that objective was a major boost in those efforts and a major factor in that accomplishment.

Additionally, we were successful with our opposition to two major electrical grid expansion campaigns, PATH & MAPP, in that both are essentially off-the-table for at least the next decade and hopefully longer. We can also be proud that our successful efforts in national Sierra's energy campaign Beyond Coal has earned us recognition from national Sierra through our selection as recipients of Beyond Coal grant funding for our MD coal campaign. The Beyond Coal grants and success in receipt of other private grants, have enabled chapter to make decisions to move forward in building the chapter with hiring additional staff and a chapter director. However, let me emphasize that the function of the additional staff is not to replace volunteers, but rather utilizing staff to increase our member advocacy and activism in getting more volunteers as feet-on-the-street, to enhance our campaigns and outreach—they cannot and will not replace volunteers since we, the volunteers, are the "grass roots" and each of us is much needed—we have much to do.

I have also worked actively with

other environmental groups because, I fully believe that all environmental groups must work together in order to achieve our common objectives. Together we will win—separately we will not be as effective as we must be!

I am a practicing Native American who believes in conservation because this environment that we call Mother Earth has been too long abused. There are many factors that have contributed to our environmental dilemmas. They all must be addressed if we are going to pass this planet over to the next seven generations in a corrected condition that will sustain them. It is an onerous but not impossible task. One of our main purposes is to be good stewards of this Mother Earth and it is we adults who must show the way so that our children will have the example to follow. I look forward to serving in a chapter at-large capacity.

David Hauck



A little more than five years ago, I began working on local environmental issues by volunteering to lead the Sierra Club's "Cool Cities" campaign here in Montgomery County. The aim of the campaign is to have city and county governments adopt policies and launch programs that

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The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

Candidates for MD Chapter Excom

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David Hauck (cont.)

will reduce greenhouse gases by all of their residents and businesses by 80 percent by 2050. In part due to the efforts of local Sierra Club members, in April, 2008, Montgomery county passed wide-ranging greenhouse gas reduction legislation that mandates the 80 percent reduction target. I participated in writing the county's Climate Action Plan that spells out how to achieve that goal.

From January, 2007 until January, 2011, I was the chair of the Montgomery County Sierra Club's executive committee. During my time as excom chair, we worked to concentrate our efforts on three priority goals for the county—increasing the energy efficiency of homes; restoring and expanding natural areas and wildlife habitats; and fighting sprawl development by promoting smart growth—walkable, mixed-use communities served by rapid and reliable public transit.

During the 2010 elections I worked

with other Montgomery folks to vet candidates for state and local offices in Montgomery county. Results in Montgomery County reflected our hard work and our effective collaboration with other organizations. Of the 30 people we endorsed in the primary, only four lost and we picked up four excellent new delegates in the state legislature.

Betsy Johnson, current political chair for the MD Chapter, has asked me to take over the chairmanship of the MD Political Committee for the 2012 election. She and I will be working together to make sure that the MD Chapter elects environmental leaders to our congressional seats and a president who will protect our long-standing environmental regulations. Stay tuned for more information on our plans as the election progresses.

I look forward to continuing to work on all of these issues as a member of the Maryland Chapter Executive Committee.

Question: How do I vote for three of these wonderful candidates?

Answer: Mark and mail in your ballot from the inside back cover.



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SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB

We send out an appeal in March to each of our members, asking for contributions directly to our Chapter. These contributions really do make a difference to us, and are an important part of our Chapter's budget.

When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in your own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature.

Please be as generous as you are able - and remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood.

Make your contribution to
Maryland Chapter, Sierra Club
7338 Baltimore Ave., Suite 111
College Park, MD 20740

Thanks so much!

Environmentalism Gregor Becker Moves to Massachusetts



Gregor Becker pulling a waste receptacle cart in support of recycling efforts at Central Maryland's Go Local Fair. Photo by Don West.

By Dan Andrews—In 2004, I decided to call the local Sierra Club - Catoclin Group representative to ask whether I could be of assistance. Gregor Becker answered the phone and responded, "I am so glad to hear you say those words." I knew I'd contacted a very special person.

As Gregor prepares to move to Massachusetts, we want to recognize and thank him for all the wonderful work he has done through the years for the chapter and the Catoclin Group.

Gregor, who has backpacked in Europe and the United States, is an unabashed nature lover whose intellectual curiosity led him to a master's degree in environmental science, on top of his master's degree in library science. It also inspired him to build his own log cabin in a rather remote area of Carroll County, where he could think, read, and recharge.

Gregor has been an active member of the Sierra Club for over 20 years, volunteering as an outings leader, conservation chair, political chair and group chair. Always interested in planning and politics, he provided very astute advice to the Catoclin Group and the Maryland Chap-

ter. His has been a familiar face at public hearings, where he engaged local officials in an effort to inform and perhaps guide them toward more environmentally sound decisions.

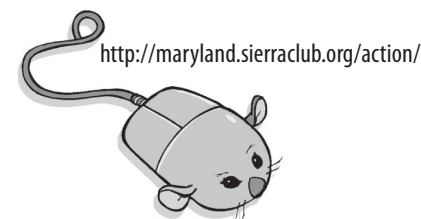
His character and his commitment to environmental issues touched many, many people, and helped protect and preserve the environs of Carroll, Frederick and Washington Counties.

Best of luck, Gregor, on your move to Massachusetts, and thank you for your outstanding service to the Sierra Club in Maryland.

Dan Andrews chairs the Catoclin Group and represents the group on the Maryland Chapter excom.

Join the Maryland Chapter's

e-mail action alert list



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Weed Warrior Carolyn Puckett prepares salad at the Jamboree. Photo: F. R. Sypher

Weeds, Waste, and Watersheds

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ing at the government door, Carroll County agreed to a pilot program at Bear Branch Nature Center, where 25 volunteers uprooted mile-a-minute in the birds-of-prey area at Hashawha Environmental Center.

Puckett eventually retired from the Social Security Administration, and, with more time, expanded the program to Piney Run Park. Again, it took months for the county to agree, but seventy one volunteers were finally trained, at no cost to the county.

She also expanded the age range to get middle school kids involved, teaching them about invasives. When she has a training, she announces it to a cooperating middle school, where she recruits students and parents.

"I can only spread myself so far. I have a mailing list of 135 people we've trained," she says.

None of the organizations provide monetary support. Puckett funds the weed bags out of her own pocket.

With so many hardy and tenacious weeds, how does Puckett stay motivated to conquer?

"Marc Imlay has had a Weed Warrior program in Chapman Forest for five years and it's almost invasive-free. That was very encouraging," she notes.

Like many Sierra Club volunteers, she's a certified joiner, involved in many other organizations. She once made a list of the volunteer organizations she belongs to and came up with 15, including

the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, Master Gardeners and yoga and martial arts organizations.

And invasive plants seem to have invaded her other volunteer efforts. She volunteers for Caring Carroll, which provides help for the elderly and disabled, mainly transportation to the doctor or a friendly visit. "It turned out that people needed their gardens weeded. So I ended up doing 18 hours of weeding."

Small wind turbines on residential roofs might seem like a far-fetched idea a few years ago. Especially in Carroll County. But **Dan Andrews**, Sierra Club Catoclin Group Chairman, had a vision and liked the idea of being first.

"Deep down I am some kind of crusader," the retired land surveyor says. "When that stops I get bored. I am more of a pioneer stock. Surveyors are the first people into any type of project. I liked that aspect, first in and you're mapping, discovering, laying the foundation that

comes thereafter. I was always intrigued with the Lewis and Clark expedition."

In 2008, Andrews's expedition into uncharted territory succeeded in having the Carroll County Commissioners unanimously vote to allow the installation of small wind turbines, priced at \$10-20,000. Andrews envisioned hundreds but he counts the 26 in his county as a huge success.

Andrews's SC involvement began in 2004 with the Cool Cities program. His attachment to nature began long before that, when he hiked 720 miles of the Appalachian Trail in the late 70s and became fascinated with climate change in the 80s.

"I thought there was a need to bring climate change to the local level," notes Andrews.

He cofounded the Maryland Heartland Sustainable Living Fair, (now called Sustainable Living Maryland) and was a member of the Carroll County Environmental Advisory Council, which pushed for the wind turbines. A second achievement on that council is the solid waste task advisory board, which rallied against the proposed 1,500 ton/day Frederick County incinerator which would haul waste in from Carroll County. He called the incinerator, "a legacy project that will

chart the course of waste disposal for the next 30-40 years."

The council also provides a forum for individuals, says Andrews, to bring any kind of environmental issue for study and recommendations. For example, several years ago, a hauling business was illegally storing manure and human solid waste on a site where it was not permitted. The neighbors brought it to the council which ruled against it.

"I am perpetual worker," notes Andrews. "I believe passionately in the work that we're doing. And it's not being done by enough people. There is a great need. We have to get people off the couch. That's the hardest part."

And all of his activism has taken place in a county which is not exactly warm and fuzzy toward environmentalists.

"This has become escapism country," says Andrews. "They think they've made it when they move here. We have people living in illusion. Sixty-three percent of the county commutes out to make a living. The remaining live on the service sector. We would have a hell of a time being self-sufficient."

He is frustrated with officials' bias

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Dan Andrews, standing, teaches Jamboree participants about energy efficiency. Photo: F. R. Sypher

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Weeds, Waste, and Watersheds

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against environmentalism.

“It’s a tremendous hurdle—their resistance to change. They should entertain both facets of the problem. They think that if they do, they will lose their base support. But they have lost their connection to nature.”

Andrews enjoys working with SC members, whom he finds to be “intelligent, caring, and altruistic people”. And it is rewarding, he notes, “helping the planet and watching others evolve.”

“You get bolstered by other members. It’s like being in the army. I look at it this way: if we lose, we are becoming better human beings in the process. That is a great gift.”

A man in a kayak on a beautiful creek. A creek that might not stay that way. That was the opening scene for **Jim Long’s** Mattawoman Creek journey that began in the mid 1990s.

“I was actually paddling all of the tide-waters in my neighborhood and I had heard that Chapman Forest was threatened and that included the Mattawoman, which I hadn’t checked out yet,” said Long, a physicist with the Navy. “I took my kayak out there and it was love at first sight. It’s hard to emphasize how much the place shouted at you that it was special. That motivated me.”

What the Mattawoman shouts: *“as near to ideal conditions as can be found in the northern Chesapeake Bay, perhaps unattainable in the other systems” (MD Department of Natural Resources—DNR), the healthiest food-chain in the Chesapeake; one of only three Maryland sites for the American lotus; Maryland’s largest breeding wood duck population; important black duck wintering ground; nesting bald eagles.*

But the Mattawoman has another descriptor: “Among America’s Most Endangered Rivers”.

Long, who lives three to four miles



Jim Long, center, describes how development threatens Mattawoman Creek. Photo: F. R. Sypher

from this jewel of a Potomac River tributary, has become a self-taught expert on the hydrology and biology of Mattawoman, and the county politics that threaten it.

After he put his paddle up on that eye-opening trip, he joined with grassroots efforts of the Friends of Mt. Aventine, led by Joy Oakes of the SC. They saved the 2,200-acre Chapman Forest State Park and Long was forever hooked on the Mattawoman.

He proceeded to fight the proposed four-lane highway (Charles Co. Cross County Connector extension), which would bisect the watershed. (See article on page 19.) As president of the Mattawoman Watershed Society, Long praises the SC’s unique hierarchical organization (national club, state chapter, local group), which, when combined with its willingness to partner with other organizations, makes it a local, grassroots powerhouse.

The state chapter has been instrumental in introducing hundreds of people to the pleasures of the Mattawoman.

“SC’s strength is its volunteers, in terms of both elected leadership and feet on the street,” notes Long, “Most reward-

ing are the people you work with and focusing on worthy preservation and protection goals.”

Long figures he averages 30 hours/week championing the Mattawoman, long a SC chapter priority.

“I do two things: work and work,” he laughs.

Does he have time for kayaking?

“I enjoy it, but usually there is an additional purpose.”

He’s either educating others about the Mattawoman or providing data. For example, recently he measured the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water for the DNR. Rust doesn’t rest, and neither does his Mattawoman vigilance.

“Because of its location, you have to be on guard. It’s the last estuary so close to urbanization spreading from DC.

“There are reasons to be guardedly optimistic, with the demise of the highway,” notes Long, “if it moves Charles County towards smart growth and land use as it impacts water quality . . . They are making a compromise. Usually when you compromise, you compromise the resources. So we’re on pins.” ■

Marta Vogel is a member of the Montgomery County Group.

Stepping Up!

Attend the local meetings or the jamboree to get to know people.

If the local chapter is not working on what you are interested in, they can probably help you contact the right people to get your project up and running.

—Carolyn Puckett

Join a local group and give of yourself unconditionally.

Good things will start to happen everywhere. And be patient.

—Dan Andrews

Campaigns are always in need of volunteers who are willing to learn and to pitch in. A successful project requires many different talents, as well as just plain hard work.

But the rewards are immense when one saves a place, educates people, or experiences new natural wonder.

—Jim Long

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Out of the City, Into the Woods

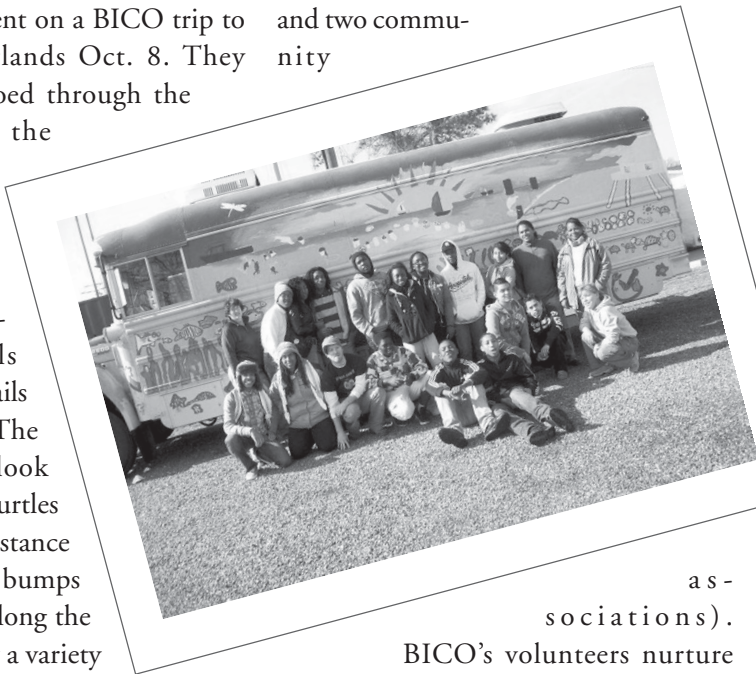
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networking post, "Back home from a trip with the AWESOME view! Feet hurt but every step was worth it."

Students from Southwest Baltimore Charter School went on a BICO trip to the Jug Bay Wetlands Oct. 8. They kayaked and canoed through the wetlands of the Patuxent River, sighting more than a dozen turtles while paddling and other interesting animals while hiking the trails around Jug Bay. The students had to look closely to see the turtles because from a distance they just look like bumps on a log. Hiking along the wetlands, they saw a variety of amphibians, birds, and even some reptiles. This trip allowed them to see firsthand how important wetlands are to wildlife and protecting the water. Fifth-graders responded enthusiastically. "Kayaking was the best because we were on the water and we saw turtles. This experience made me feel happy and relaxed," said Lee.

"Kayaking was new, it made me feel happy and cool," said Vernon "I learned

safe outdoor experiences at no cost to them. BICO is one of 48 members of the Sierra Club's Inner City Outings. The program serves youth associated with its four city partners (two schools and two community



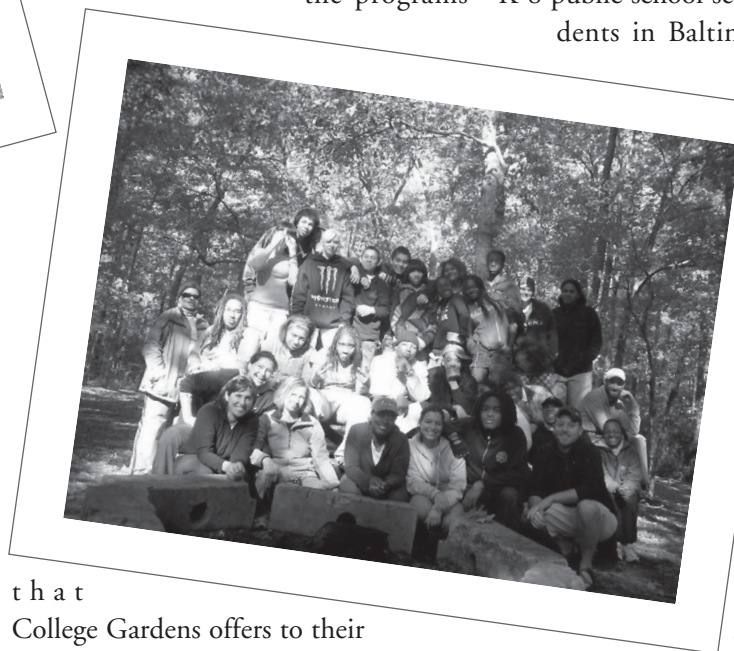
associations). BICO's volunteers nurture personal growth, inter-cultural and inter-generational understanding, and a community service ethic.

Our Partnerships

BICO maintains four successful agencies or partnerships who each take an outing every month. A typical outing could be a hike, bike, swim, or paddle at a nearby state/county park, sailing with the Downtown Sailing Center, or perhaps a two-

Sunday afternoon.

The first agency is the YMCA at College Gardens Community Center. College Gardens seeks to build strong kids, strong families and a strong community through programs which focus on the development of mind body and spirit. Comprehensive afterschool and summer programs for children and teens encompass a variety of activities including academic assistance, cultural arts, recreation, sports, outdoor education as well as leadership development, service learning and monthly family nights. ICO is one of the programs



that College Gardens offers to their community. This agency is in dire need of volunteers to assist with and to lead

Washington Village/Pigtown in Southwest Baltimore. This non-profit outreach center provides programs, services, and support that strengthen individuals and families. For children and youth, Paul's Place offers daily after-school programs for grades 1 through 12, with activities including academic support, health and wellness, personal enrichment, and fun. Summer camps keep children and youth learning and growing between the school years. This agency is also in need of volunteers and leaders.

Southwest Baltimore Charter School is a K-8 public school serving over 400 students in Baltimore's Washington

Village/Pigtown community. The school views field work as an integral part of learning, believing that community and outdoor experiences foster engagement, curiosity, and health, and promote personal responsibility. This

agency is also in need of volunteers and leaders.

I am passionate about this organization because I have seen firsthand the difference it makes in the lives of children. The impact that our program has on the youth we serve is life changing.

about photosynthesis and on the BICO trip I saw a lot of (plants that use) photosynthesis," said Jahiem.

"Thanks for making kayaking so easy! Without you I have a feeling I would have fell out of that kayak. You really helped me face my fear. Love, Jordan," another wrote.

BICO was founded with the goal of providing under-served Baltimore City youth with educational, enjoyable, and

day camping event at a regional campsite, such as Assateague Island National Seashore, Blackburn Cabin on the Appalachian Trail, Patapsco Valley, Pocomoke State Park or Meadowood in Lorton, VA. BICO typically averages 10 youths per outing. The youths are primarily African American boys and girls ranging in age from 10 to 18. The day trips last approximately five hours, overnights from Friday afternoon or Saturday morning until

outings.

Digital Harbor High School, also an Inner City Outing agency, is an innovative technology-focused high school in Federal Hill. The DHHS agency serves 9th through 12th graders and participates in many one-day and multi-day outings, such as hikes, camping and kayaking. This agency is also in need of volunteers and leaders.

Paul's Place, another agency, is in

The Importance of BICO

The impact that our program has on the youth we serve is life changing. I personally wouldn't still be teaching in Baltimore City if it were not for my involvement with Baltimore Inner City Outings.

I am passionate about this organization because I have seen firsthand so many times the difference it makes in the lives of children and do not want to see it end.

(continued on page 9)

The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

Out of the City, Into the Woods

(continued from page 8)

I see every day the value that volunteer hours can have because I am also an agency representative. Every minute you volunteer makes a difference in the life of a child who has never done or seen something done or seen on an outing. Kids experience some notable firsts on outings—like riding a bike, fishing, catching a fish, completing a hike, identifying a rock, smelling a flower, learning about trees, paddling a kayak and other really incredible things.

But despite its successes over the years, like many non-profit organizations, Baltimore Inner City Outings is in crisis. BICO has no paid staff, and though we have over 350 people on our gmail list, the organization is at risk of collapse because we do not have enough volunteers to staff the outings. This means that kids suffer.

Since its founding, BICO has conducted over 400 outings, allowing nearly 5,000 youth to experience the outdoors. Approximately 4,000 volunteer-hours have been devoted to the delivery of these outings. Volunteer officers help keep BICO afloat. The chair is the point of contact for volunteers, coordinates trainings for leaders and helps with fundraising and team leaders for each agency. The vice-chair handles all van reservations, statistics and trip insurance reports, combined into quarterly reports to Sierra Club National. The treasurer pays bills and reimburses volunteers for expenses. The grant coordinator ensures that the program remains funded and grantors receive timely spending reports. The certification coordinator ensures that all volunteers obtain and maintain credentials. The webmaster maintains and updates the website and communicates dates of upcoming outings. The gearmaster helps with organization of the gear necessary for outings.

Despite recent trainings, we are really stretching to make sure that we have two certified leaders on every outing.

Becoming certified does not have to change the level of commitment or involvement once you volunteer, but it does make it easier to run trips when more of the adult volunteers are certified as leaders.

Decide how you are going to volunteer and just do it. All of agency representatives are highly skilled, and know their students, so if you are new to volunteering, you should not worry that you won't know what to do during an outing. Choose the agency you want to volunteer with or come to an informational meeting on the third Wednesday of the month. All outings and meetings are posted on our website calendar of events. When more people volunteer, it means our organization is more sustainable.

All of our trip dates are posted on the calendar at www.ico.sierraclub.org/baltimore/. Let the team leader know you want to volunteer!

There are several requirements for volunteer certification. All of the documents may be found on the website at www.digitalharbor.org/bico/?n=Resources. Start with completing the volunteer forms, background check, application and the CARP test. (This is Child Abuse Recognition Prevention). Email the completed forms to bico.certificationcoordinator@gmail.com, with a copy (cc) to baltimoreinnercityoutings@gmail.com. If you must use regular mail, please refer to our website for the mailing address to use.

More information about BICO's outing program and how you can volunteer can be found at our website: <http://ico.sierraclub.org/baltimore/> or email baltimoreinnercityoutings@gmail.com. You may also contact us at 410-357-6242.

Nicole Veltre-Luton is a co-chair of BICO. Photos of BICO outings by Nicole Veltre-Luton.

New Energy Committee Powers Up

By Richard Reis—How we get our energy is an important factor in determining whether we can maintain an environment necessary for human and other life. Fossil fuels will, sooner or later, run out, and they pollute the environment. The Energy Committee's goal is to work toward reducing the use of fossil fuels and toward increasing renewable energy sources, both in Maryland and globally.

On October 17, the Energy Committee met for the first time to address these topics:

1. Reviewing the impacts of power plants and transmission lines on Maryland's natural resources, <http://esm.versar.com/pprp/ceir15/toc.htm>
2. Reviewing the EmPOWER Maryland law, the 2008 Energy Efficiency Act, and ascertaining whether energy companies are meeting the law's targets of reducing both per capita energy consumption and per capita peak demand by 5% by 2011, and 15% by the end of 2015 (based on a 2007 baseline); discovering whether privately-owned utilities are following best practices to achieve the law's goals, and whether the state is following best practices for its own facilities
3. Suggesting ways to facilitate the retirement of old and inefficient coal-fired power plants
4. Researching other laws pertaining to energy and the environment and how we can assist with implementing these (e.g., 2011 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations; 2011 Solar Net Metering)
5. Researching hydrofracking in Maryland and proposed laws that would prevent unsafe practices or drilling in critical locations, such as in watersheds. Hydrofracking, or hydraulic fracturing, involves the high-pressure

injection of a mixture of water, sand, and chemicals into rock formations deep underground to obtain natural gas.

6. Studying what should be done to stop trash incineration and to improve the environmental outcome for landfill gas capture projects
7. Suggesting ways to promote offshore wind energy projects
8. Reviewing Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) reports to see whether Maryland is complying fully
9. Deciding whether and how to present documentaries about energy and the environment (such as, *Gasland*, *Energy Crossroads*, and *An Inconvenient Truth*) at the Maryland Sierra Club's College Park office or other location
10. Holding workshops on home weatherization, solar hot water, and solar electric home energy projects to show homeowners how they can reduce the environmental impact of their homes while saving money

If you would like to learn more or attend future meetings, please contact Rich Reis, chapter energy chair, rreis@verizon.net or Chris Hill, chapter energy organizer, chris.hill@sierraclub.org. ■

Rich Reis lives in Silver Spring. He is an engineer by profession and a bicyclist by avocation. Rich serves on the chapter excom, is an outings leader, helps with this newsletter, and chairs this new energy committee. His other environmental interests include sustainable transportation, minimizing the use of pesticides, and lowering the harm of tobacco use.

The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

Once a Tree Hugger, Always a Tree Hugger

(continued from page 1)

Take, for example, the recent decision by the Maryland Department of the Environment to deny key wetland permits for the proposed Cross County Connector in Charles County. Members of the Mattawoman Watershed Society, which includes many Maryland Chapter volunteers, have been fighting against this highway for many years and received good news in early November, 2011, when MDE denied the highway permit because the application failed “to properly account for or address the [highway’s] environmental impacts.” As the article about the highway on page 19 of this issue states, the fight may not be over yet.

Many Options

In truth, I’m not much of a fighter (the lightest of lightweights at the moment, although I suspect this is changing). My guess is that there are many Maryland Chapter members who are like me but who would like to contribute in some way. Luckily, the environmental movement needs all kinds of people, which is how I came to be involved with the Maryland Chapter about 10 years ago.

At the time, I wanted to volunteer but wasn’t sure whether I had anything to offer since I equated Sierra Club with political action. I didn’t know whether my interests and skills would fit into that picture. Then I just happened to see a *Chesapeake* ad calling for volunteers to help with an environmental radio program to be produced by the Chapter. It took just one phone call and one meeting at the Santa Fe Café in College Park to know that this was something I could do and wanted to do.

For several years after, I was one of a team of several creative, totally wonderful volunteers who created the Watershed

Radio show, an environmental education project exploring the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Through one-minute daily spots, we tried to show the connection between human activities and natural processes. Topics included natural events, scientific research findings, the personality traits of a specific species, or an environmental memory.

If I had not made a decision to volunteer, I never would have met “the ducks,” as we came to call ourselves. Not only would I have missed a valuable learn-



ing opportunity, I also would have missed a lot of laughs and being part of a smart, spirited team who produced (all humility aside now) a great end product. And it’s even possible that, when our spots aired on a few local radio programs, some people actually learned something about the Maryland environment and the issues that challenge its existence, which was, of course, our goal. (You can listen to some of our spots on the web; go to www.watershedradio.org/about.htm.)

Sharing this memory makes me think more about what it means to be a Sierra Club volunteer. Although it is certainly about trying to win the battles that protect our environment, it’s also about being part of a community of like-minded people, working together to bring about results, and learning from each other—especially when you don’t agree on how to get things done.

A friend of mine believes that many people volunteer because they want “to serve,” a phrase full of meanings, the simplest is “being of service.” Although I’m not so sure I like the idea of being a servant, I do know that I don’t want to sit idly by while more and more of the natural environment disappears and faces challenges that threaten its survival. What’s a tree-hugger to do?

One Step at a Time

Although I’d like to end this little article by begging anyone—whoops, maybe urging is a better word—who’s thinking about volunteering with the Chapter, but hasn’t yet, to make that first call or send that first email. If you’re still wondering “why” you would want to do more than just sit around and worry about what’s happening to our environment, here are a few words of wisdom from author **Clarissa Pinkola Estes** that emphasize that even doing a little is better than doing nothing:

“Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach.” ■

Janis Oppelt is a member of the executive committee of the Prince George’s County Group and the Chesapeake editorial team.

There’s Something for Everyone

Volunteer with the Prince George’s Group:

The new Prince George’s County Group Executive Committee is in the process of developing a new organizational structure that has lots of room for volunteers of all types, temperaments, and time to share. If you have wanted to “do something” for your local environment, please review the committee list and tasks below. Even if you only have a little time or energy to offer, it will help us help our local environment—and the people who live in it.

When you’ve decided it’s time to be proactive, please call Janis Oppelt at 301-474-5358 or email her at janiso@erols.com for more information or to put your name on the list. We’re looking forward to recruiting new blood—and we’re not even vampires! Please join us ...

Communications Committee: Maintain webpage, email and phone lists; contribute to and develop newsletter articles, brochures, and press releases

Education, Outreach, and Membership Committee: Interact and educate with the public at civic festivals and civic association meetings; help to plan social events; coordinate the annual Maloney Award; pursue membership-building efforts; plan outings and annual elections

Legislation and Political Committee: Monitor County Council legislation for environmental impacts; educate and organize events for Council members and environmentalist constituents; organize email and direct lobbying campaigns; hold candidate forums; and grade County candidates with objective scorecard

Conservation Committee: Contribute to this year’s environmental campaigns, which include Phase II of the WIP (watershed implementation plan) and storm-water management

The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

Prince George's Group Elects Leaders and Sets Goals



Prince George's County Group Chair Alex Hirtle speaks at Clean Water Forum in Forest Heights

By **Alex Hirtle**—The Prince George's Group is happy to announce its Executive Committee Officers for the coming year: Alex Hirtle, Chair; Mike Martin, Vice Chair; Martha Ainsworth, Secretary. Committee members include Tom Dernoga, Lourene Mioviski, Janis Oppelt, Nick Orrick, Martha Schmidt, and Fred Tutman. Tom Topping, Group member in good-standing, will continue to serve as Treasurer.

The Group held its bimonthly meeting in November where we facilitated a brain-storming session and recorded goals for the coming year. Some of these included a "Score Card" for local elected officials, rating them on their initiatives and voting records for environmental issues. As challenging as the task appears, a now-forming working group that will be drafting the score card process promises it will be rated on objective criteria, and will hold the local officials accountable for issues ranging from stormwater management to suburban sprawl (both are formidable issues in Prince George's County). Other goals include expanding the diversity and membership of the

group, developing a streamlined email and phone banking alert process, enhanced outreach, and additional presence in Upper Marlboro, the county seat.

After the meeting, many members stayed to view a film called *Pig Business* and then joined in for a grand bonfire where we ate selections from a scrumptious potluck and barbeque with none other than roasted pig. Fred Tutman led the activities at the Patuxent RiverKeepers headquarters which was actually celebrating their recent office move.

In mid-November, the Group facilitated a Clean Water Forum in Forest Heights, an incorporated town with severe flooding issues. Mayor Jacqueline Goodall revealed her vision for the town including upgrading their stormwater capabilities, allowing zero percent water run-off in the future. The town has already incorporated a Green roof on the municipal building and is implementing environmental site design (ESD) and other good stormwater practices in the municipality. Congresswoman Donna Edwards, a champion for the environment and advocate for good stormwater

practices, also spoke at the event and applauded Mayor Goodall and the town for their excellent work. Special thanks to staff person Claudia Friedetzky who organized and facilitated the event.

The Forum was part of an initiative for more public scrutiny and input on the State Watershed Implementation (WIP II) Plan that in part is being developed in Prince George's County. The WIP is a federal mandate set in place through an executive order by President Obama to provide for the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The Chesapeake Bay Watershed spans over six states and the District of Columbia; its drainage basin covers over 64,000 square miles, and its discharge into the Atlantic Ocean averages about 78,000 cubic feet per second.

Grow something big!
Join your local group.



Congressmember Donna Edwards, center, and Maryland Chapter staff members Claudia Friedetzky, left, and Laurel Imlay at Clean Water Forum in Forest Heights

From the Chair

(continued from page 2)

to the GBG, the GBG Chair in 2004 -2008 and the MD Chapter Chair in 2008.

My reason for volunteering with Sierra Club was the result of several factors coming together. But the major impetus was a spiritual calling to combine Native American tradition and teaching with activism and advocacy on behalf of the natural world. We are spiritual beings housed in a physical body, with mental and emotional faculties to experience life. Our purpose in life is to love and care for others. And the "others" include everything—the plants, the animals, the insects and creepy-crawlers, the creatures of the air and water.

We—humankind—are the environment. We are not separated from it; we are integral to it.

In Native American teachings, we are all connected and our mission is to "walk softly" on this planet we call Mother Earth so that we can pass it on and ensure its sustainability for the next seven generations. We—humankind—are the environment. We are not separated from it; we are integral to it. We are creators; our thoughts, words, dreams and actions CREATE! But for far too long we have not been walking in balance among the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of our being. With respect to our Earth we have been "takers," not "leavers" and this must be recognized and corrected. Giving future generations—our children and grandchildren—the legacy they deserve requires a commitment from all of us. Become a "leaver" and volunteer with me!

The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

Moving Maryland Beyond Coal

Town Hall Supporting Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Is Huge Success

By Chandler Sherman and Chris Hill—

Members of the Sierra Club and other concerned citizens filled the room at a town hall in Maryland last week to discuss offshore wind energy. The event was held in the Hillcrest Heights community of Prince George's County, a predominantly African American community just a few miles upwind of the polluting GenOn Potomac River coal plant in Alexandria, Virginia. (The plant has recently been scheduled for retirement on October 12, 2012 thanks to the tireless efforts of the Beyond Coal Campaign!) The event drew a diverse crowd, from lifelong Sierrans to Prince George's County community members, who want to bring cleaner air and jobs to their community.

Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown and State Delegate Aisha Braveboy addressed the 90-person crowd and expressed their enthusiastic support for bringing offshore wind energy to Maryland. A panel of experts told the packed room how transitioning from coal to offshore wind could improve public health, advance climate justice, and bring good jobs to Prince George's County.

Though Maryland currently gets 60% of its power from coal, Marylanders have spoken loud and clear that we want clean energy and green jobs from offshore wind. The Sierra Club and its allies organized six town hall meetings around the rest of the state during November and December to advance the possibilities of bringing offshore wind to Maryland.

The town hall meeting was coordinated by the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club, along with a broad coalition of groups including the League of Women Voters, Interfaith Power & Light and the Chesapeake Climate Action Network.

We need your help moving into the new year to make offshore wind energy a reality in Maryland! ■



Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown discusses offshore wind at a town hall meeting in Hillcrest Heights. Del. Aisha Braveboy, seated at the table, also spoke.

Help Bring Offshore Wind Energy to Maryland



Town hall attendees sign petition in support of offshore wind energy.

Join our energy team! Contact Chris Hill at chris.hill@sierraclub.org. Read more about the Energy Committee on page 9.

Sign the petition to bring offshore wind to Maryland. Visit our website at www.maryland.sierraclub.org

Send a letter to the editor to your local newspaper in support of offshore wind.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



VOLUNTEER with US!

Sierra Club offers many different types of volunteer opportunities for anyone looking to become more involved in helping to protect the planet. By volunteering, you will be given the exciting opportunity to contribute to the betterment of our world and our future. So get active, meet new people, and have some fun!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Country _____

Home Phone (____) _____

Work Phone (____) _____

Fax (____) _____

Email _____

Please select the activities that interest you.

- ☐ Attend and/or Testify at a Hearing
- ☐ Door Hanger/Literature Delivery
- ☐ Fundraising
- ☐ Ground Truthing/Forest or Timber Sale Monitoring
- ☐ Host Club Leaders Visiting My Area
- ☐ Lead an Outdoor Activity or Inner City Outing
- ☐ Perform Legal Services
- ☐ Phone Calling
- ☐ Media Relations
- ☐ Signature Gathering
- ☐ Work at Club Booths at Fairs and Events
- ☐ Use My Vehicle to Transport People and Supplies
- ☐ Work in the Club office
- ☐ Work at a Mailing Party
- ☐ Trail Maintenance, Tree Planting or Other Outdoor Activity
- ☐ Volunteer Coordination
- ☐ Work on the Web Site
- ☐ Write Letters

Please list your top three conservation issues:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Please send form to:

Sierra Club, Maryland Chapter
7338 Baltimore Avenue,
Suite #111
College Park, MD 20740

The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

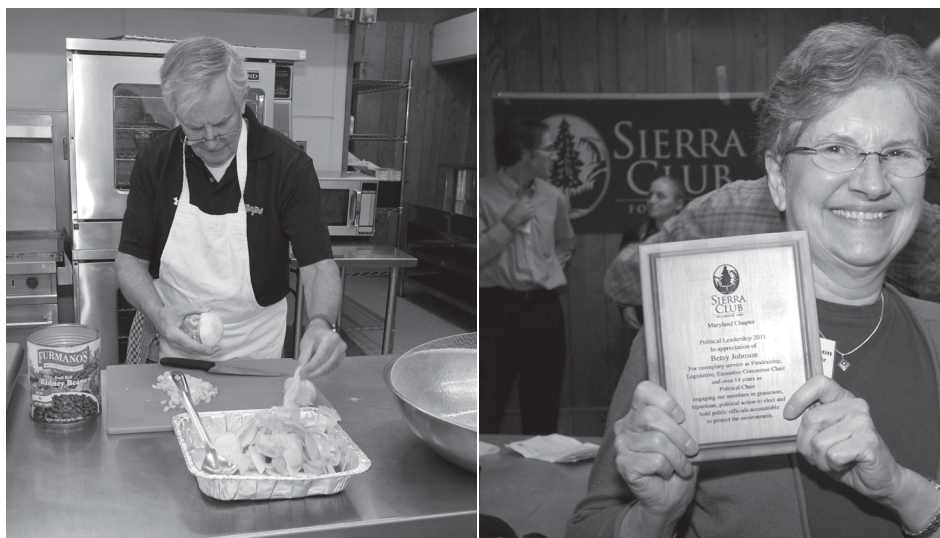
Volunteer Energy Overflows at Chapter Jamboree

By Sarah Peters—As a first-time participant in the Maryland Sierra Club's biennial Jamboree, I was blown away by the sheer enthusiasm and camaraderie of my fellow attendees. All of us were inspired by Executive Director Michael Brune's stirring Friday night kick-off speech on the Beyond Coal campaign. When Director Brune stated that from 2002-2010 the Sierra Club stopped 154 new coal power plants, the room burst into vigorous applause.

The heart of the Sierra Club will always be the energy that volunteers contribute every day. Despite the dismal weather, this energy was on full display during the Jamboree with some help from ample stores of coffee and homemade food. A band of intrepid Sierrans ventured into the cold rain for Bioblitz hikes led by Marc Imlay, Biodiversity and Stewardship Chair of the Conservation Committee. On Saturday night, we danced our hearts out to the band Pressing Strings and raised money for the chapter through a live auction.

For five-time Jamboree participant Anne Ambler of Montgomery County, Director Brune's speech was this year's highlight. She was impressed by how much organizers have refined the logistics of this event. She said that this Jamboree was a "fine-oiled machine" compared to the first Jamboree she attended. Though the weather did not cooperate, Ms. Ambler said the Bioblitz was a welcome addition to the Jamboree. She also fondly remembered the square dancing from the first two Jamborees she attended. Ms. Ambler served as Montgomery County Group Chair for several years and now works on stream protection with the Neighbors of the Northwest Branch (<http://www.neighborsnwb.org/>).

But fun aside, we all came to the Jamboree to learn how we can contribute to improving Maryland's environment. The Grassroots and Lobby Training session, run by Jennifer Searfoss, stood out



Outings Chair Jan Hoffman prepares for dinner; Political Chair Betsy Johnson accepts a leadership award.



Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune takes questions from Jamboree participants.



Biologist Joe Metzger leads a bioblitz hike. All photos by F. R. Sypher.

the most to me. This workshop was incredibly useful for anyone participating in the Sierra Club's offshore wind and clean water legislative campaigns. Ms. Searfoss strongly recommends handwriting personal letters to your local policymakers for maximum effect. When she writes letters, she even includes pictures drawn by her nephews for that personal touch. Ms. Searfoss cautioned that when writing about an issue, you should always present it as a problem with specific examples and provide a solution. Without a solution, lawmakers are unlikely to take action on an issue.

Another highly effective lobbying strategy is meeting policymakers in their offices. As with writing letters, ensure that you present the issue with specific examples and provide a solution. After the meeting, send a thank-you letter and make sure to stay in touch. Offer yourself as a resource by sending relevant articles. Ms. Searfoss even sends birthday and holiday cards to the legislators with whom she has built a relationship. If you do not have time to write a letter or meet in-person, then make a phone call!

The Sierra Club is ramping up their 2012 legislative campaigns in preparation for the Maryland legislature's January-April 2012 session. You can contact Chris Bryan (chris.bryan@mdsierra.org), the legislative chair, for more information on how to become involved. You can also visit mlis.state.md.us to learn more about the Maryland General Assembly and find your legislators. The Sierra Club needs your help now more than ever to make offshore wind a reality for Maryland! ■

Sarah Peters is a member of the Catocin Group and a recent graduate of Gettysburg College, where she earned a degree in Environmental Studies. She is especially interested in climate change issues, and volunteers as a writer for Chesapeake and for the MD Sierra Club Legislative Committee.

The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

The Same Thing Again... But Different!

2012 Annapolis Preview – Getting Involved in Maryland’s Legislative Process

By David O’Leary—January is just around the corner, and that means the General Assembly will convene in Annapolis soon. A variety of legislation related to issues of concern to the Sierra Club will be considered, and there are lots of opportunities to get involved. Some of the issues to be discussed will sound familiar – because they are! Many of our key bills did not pass in 2011, so they will be reintroduced this session, frequently with adjusted policy approaches based on what we learned over the past year.

Passing a bill to provide incentives for building an offshore wind farm is our top priority for 2012. Offshore wind is the largest source of renewable energy currently available to Maryland. If we are to achieve the state goal of 20% of our electricity coming from renewable sources by 2020, we need to get started on taking advantage of this resource. Over the past two months Sierra Club volunteers and staff have worked with coalition partners to plan Town Hall meetings throughout the state— perhaps you are one of the hundreds of people who attended one! Throughout the summer and fall, the key General Assembly committees met to study the policy options and implications, and we were there listening, providing our perspective, and meeting with the key legislators. We’ve also been reaching out to other key stakeholders, including the business community and labor to gain support for this developing proposal. The groundwork has been laid, and now we need to pass the bill – with your help!

Protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay is an important issue in Maryland, but particularly this year, given the EPA-mandated “pollution diet” that is being developed. One or more bills to adjust state level policy and raise revenue to implement Bay clean-up programs related to the “pollution diet” will likely be

introduced. One proposal currently under discussion as this article is being written is an increase in the Bay Restoration Fund, or “flush tax.” This bill would provide increased funding for additional wastewater treatment plant upgrades, agricultural programs to reduce nutrient pollution from farms, and fund repairs and upgrades to systems for managing stormwater.

The bill to require retail stores to collect a five cent fee for disposable bags will be re-introduced in 2012. Passing this bill will help to reduce another important source of pollution that affects our communities and waterways.

Look for other bills that relate to Sierra Club issues, ranging from hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, to energy efficiency, to campaign finance reform.

We made some progress in Annapolis in 2011, but not enough. We need your help to be more successful in 2012. There are many ways to get involved. Our chapter legislative committee has grown in size and involvement over the past few years. An article in a recent issue of *Chesapeake* described people’s positive experiences with the committee and participating in the legislative process. Whether you have a lot of time or a little, and whether you have expertise on a particular issue or not, there is a role for you. You can visit Annapolis for the Environmental Summit on January 24th, or for one of the chapter lobby nights on January 30th, February 27th, and March 26th. You can call or write your elected officials about the issues that you care about,

and talk to others to encourage them to call and write, too. Letters to the editor of your local paper also make a big difference. We need help to review bills and write and present testimony. Contact Chris Bryan at chris.bryan@mdsierra.org, or call the chapter office at 301-277-7111 to find out how you can get involved.

Many familiar issues will be heard again in Annapolis this year, but there are always some things that will be different. If everyone contributes some time and energy to the effort, we’ll be even more successful in passing important legislation to protect Maryland’s environment.

David O’Leary is vice chair and conservation chair of the Maryland Chapter Executive Committee. ■



17th Annual Environmental Legislative Summit

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Miller Senate Office Building

5:00 pm –6:30 pm

Doors will open at 4:30 pm.

Please join us!

Each year we join with a coalition of nearly 20 of Maryland’s environmental groups to present to the public our priorities for the legislative session. The session brings an opportunity to improve our environment by advocating for better environmental laws.

Do your part for the environment and our communities! Come to Annapolis and hear from top legislative leaders and advocates about 2012 environmental legislation.

Be sure and stop by the Sierra Club table and say hi!

Monday Lobby Nights are January 30, February 27, and March 26

Interested in learning more? Want to get involved with the Maryland Sierra Club’s legislative committee? Call the office at **301-277-7111** or email **chris.bryan@mdsierra.org**. **We hope to see you there!**

Incineration vs. Recycling: Why Incineration Is Not Good for Maryland

By Caroline Eader—Over 50 nationally recognized environmental and community economic development groups are opposed to trash incineration for numerous reasons: water pollution, air pollution, climate change, waste of energy, and poor economic planning.

False Choice

The incinerator industry promotes a false belief that the choices in handling our waste are either burning it to “make energy” or burying it in a landfill. The existence of a trash incinerator (what I call a Waste of Energy facility) does not eliminate the need for a landfill. There is waste which cannot be incinerated (10-15% of the waste stream), and after burning there is a significant amount of ash which must be landfilled (10-15% by volume, or about 30% by weight).

Trash as a Source of Renewable Energy?

This year Governor O’Malley signed into law Senate Bill 690 which gives trash burning Tier 1 renewable energy status, the same as wind and solar. It is not good policy to categorize burning waste as renewable energy when 3-5 times the energy can be saved by recycling the recoverable materials found in household and business discards.

Burning Recyclables

Sometimes people are led to believe only items which cannot be recycled are processed, but the incinerator contracts in place in Maryland do not exclude recyclable materials from being incinerated. And if you ask a facility manager or an industry spokesperson why they don’t remove the recoverable material they will say, “It’s not my job.” Their job is to get BTUs from plastic and paper, not recycling.

You will hear the marketing claim that communities with incinerators have the

greater recycling rates. Incineration is not the cause of higher recycling rates (unless the leftover ash is counted as “recycling”, which Maryland does). The only recoverable materials from an incineration facility are the metals left over after the burning process. Metal recovery accounts for a 2-3 % increase in recycling rates and can be reached with a lot less than the \$600,000,000 price tag of the current series of trash incinerators the industry wants to build.

What We Can Do Instead

The communities which are now achieving the greater diversion rates are Zero Waste communities. Look to mainstream publications such as *The Wall Street Journal* to tell you about cities now achieving a 77% (San Francisco) and 68% (San Diego) diversion rates. With more and more communities across the U.S. and Canada adopting Zero Waste resolutions and implementing Zero Waste plans (Austin, Texas, Atlanta, Georgia), landfill diversion rates are starting to rise. San Francisco’s waste study analysis found 90% of its waste stream is recyclable. A

community implementing a Zero Waste diversion goal of 75% would have less discarded than a community with an incinerator would need to landfill.

What does Zero Waste look like?

Go to a Zero Waste community and you’ll see a 3-bin system to discard waste—a bin for compostables (1/3 to 1/2 of the waste stream is compostable), one for recyclables and finally, one for what will go to the landfill. In Atlanta, where they have a “Zero Waste Zone” I’ve been to Ecco and South City Kitchen restaurants (partner Steve Simon was Georgia’s Restaurateur of the Year in 2007) which use no dumpsters. Everything is reusable, recyclable, or compostable and the kitchen grease is sent to be converted to biofuels. (Yours truly went behind these restaurants to see for herself!) The Zero Waste Zone concept is supported by the National Restaurant Association.

The destruction of recyclable resources is just one reason that providing incentives to trash incineration is the wrong direction for the State of Maryland. ■

What can we do to stop waste incineration in Maryland?

1. Write Gov. O’Malley (mom@gov.state.md.us) to implement a moratorium, just like the governor of Massachusetts did, and STOP all permitting of current waste incineration projects in Maryland!
2. Especially if you live in Frederick or Carroll County, contact you elected officials and tell them that you oppose waste incineration.
3. Go to Waste Not Frederick (www.no-incinerator.org) to learn how you can work for better alternatives than trash incineration.

Reasons to Stop the Frederick/Carroll Incinerator

By Dan Andrews—1. **This is a legacy project.**

Should it be built and become operational, the die will be cast for the next 30-40 years for burning recyclable material. It is really a waste destruction facility as plastics and paper are necessary to reach the required efficient BTU values. Also, it will be impossible to retreat from the financial obligations to the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority (NMWDA) & Wheelabrator Corporation.

2. **There are better alternatives.**

Over 90% of our discards are recyclable and shouldn’t be burnt. Burning destroys these resources, whereas recycling reuses

material in a “cradle to cradle” fashion.

3. **Climate change.**

Our pre-industrial CO2 level was 278 ppm; today it is 387 ppm (a 39% increase). Methane, a greenhouse gas 20 times more powerful, is up 150%. Climate change impacts where we live, our water supply, food production, other ecosystems and species, health, public safety, and even national security.

4. **Waste incinerators are inefficient.**

They do not produce much electricity compared to other generators costing about the same, while producing even more carbon dioxide per unit of energy than coal-fired plants.

5. **Costs.**

The project is incredibly expensive: \$527 to \$600 million! Also both counties will still need an operating landfill for ash and other waste.

6. **Toxic ash.**

Each county will be required to landfill the toxic ash waste left by burning. The ash contains mercury, lead, cadmium, and arsenic, and is considered hazardous by the EPA.

7. **Incinerators encourage waste.**

The incinerator requires 1,500 to 1,430 tons of trash per day, which is more trash than these counties currently

(continued on page 17)

Pollution Trading for the Bay: Fresh Water vs. Fresh Money

By Fred Tutman—On the eve of implementation for the long-awaited regulatory limits on Chesapeake Bay pollution (Total Maximum Daily Loads), environmentalists must question the prudence of an enormous threat to the integrity of our waterways: the pollution loading limits that promote swapping water quality gains for dollars and cents. I am referring to none other than pollution or nutrient trading and the so-called market-based approaches to controlling pollution being planned by states.

It's easier to count dollars than to track pollutants

As regional economies have become dependent on polluting industries, the temptation of putting a price tag on compliance is almost irresistible. There is nothing more cynical than viewing regulated ecosystems as “marketplaces.” It reflects a worldview that readily favors economic compromise instead of strict compliance with Bay-wide anti-pollution aims. It really is easier to count dollars rather than to track stormwater, manure, sediment, and the toxins that flow daily into our waterways. And so while existing approaches to conservation have resulted in an ever more depleted Bay, promoters of pollution trading have found an avenue that businesses find far more appealing than strict compliance with anti-pollution laws: trading, offsetting, and mitigating. These approaches suggest that instead of enforcing the laws, we should go into business with the polluters.

Nutrient trading would allow regulated dischargers to buy pollution “credits” in order to delay or meet their Clean Water Act obligations. Credits would be sold by entities which have created speculative reductions that affect the “net” burden on the protected resource. Presently, there is almost no guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency about what sort of trades would be considered

inappropriate. For example, could traders swap credits for mitigation between different types of pollution, or among different jurisdictions or watersheds? It has largely been left up to the states and the polluters themselves to come up with their own approaches.

Polluting industries have no incentive to modernize

Market-based methods allow bad or less than ideal practices to occur in one place while purportedly making good with better practices elsewhere. Proponents of these transactions (with the benefits possibly more evident on paper than in the ecosystem) argue that this trading of credits helps raise much needed funds and provides incentives to clean up the environment, and that it encourages improvements in a setting where regulatory

enforcement has all but failed. Detractors point out that aside from the tepid performance of

trading schemes elsewhere, there are genuine difficulties with tracking and verifying pollution credits.

Nutrient credit trading institutionalizes bad practices where the trade costs can ultimately be passed on to consumers and the pollution reductions never actually materialize. There really is no clear incentive to modernize polluting industries if the regulated community can just pay a fee to come into compliance with the laws. This approach substitutes empirical benchmarks of improved water quality for a Monopoly-like strategy of presumed environmental gains and hypothetical indicators.

Mandatory approaches to enforcing

and regulating pollution have been an abysmal failure of willpower and governmental resources, as the health of the Bay continues to decline. Historically, the states have done a very poor job with bringing polluters to justice. It now appears that the powers that be have decided, instead, to offer an economic escape clause as an alternative to enforcement and compliance.

Creating “funny money” credits does not address pollution problems

A market-based system, clearly, would be dominated by the most profitable incentives available, and—no surprise—make polluting more profitable for the violators. The cleanups are usually paid for and subsidized by the public treasury. Creating “funny money” credits does not address the underlying pollution problems; it merely generates more revenue for a pollution-dependent economy.

Credit trading provides an expedient means for violators to do what they are already inclined to do, while paying their way into illusory compliance.

Trading is a fiscal tool that, if improperly applied,

could allow some of the Bay's most egregious polluters to maintain the status quo or, worse, move the fiscal benefits derived from the sale of credits to communities and interests far from where the actual impacts occur. Compliance problems would be solved by shuffling papers and moving money (and pollution) around: Community A has dirty water, but we send some money to Community B to clean their waterway instead of Community A, which has the need. In some instances, middlemen (aggregators) even

earn a fee for brokering such a transaction. Putting the incentives on dollars instead of on environmental results will only raise money—not reduce pollution.

This initiative appears to be about raising money

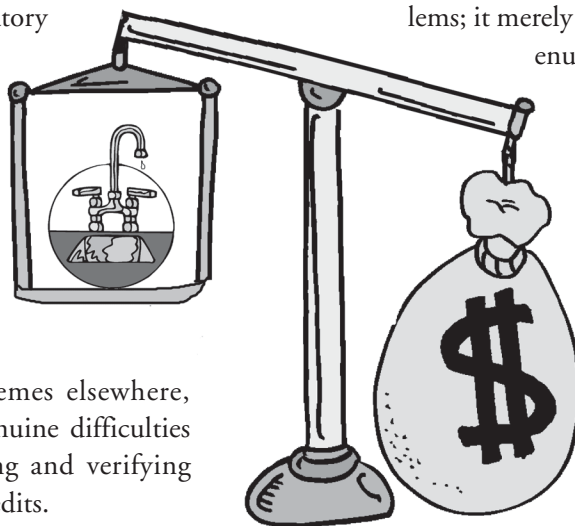
No compelling evidence has been put forth that such trades would be effective at reducing pollution, or that the Bay states are inclined (or able) to track and authenticate the effectiveness of these trades and their cumulative impacts on water quality. In most proposed trades we have reviewed, trading is the end game instead of the means to an end.

A study commissioned by the Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment and The Maroon Group, a Richmond-based research firm, suggests that trading programs are fundamentally economic development tools, not tools for pollution reduction. Clearly, the proposed Bay trading programs lack the specific nexus to reduce pollution.

EPA and the states must create safeguards and an enforcement structure to ensure that bad trades are not transacted, that traded credits are generated by genuine pollution reductions, and that trades are expeditiously retired so that the regulated community has some incentive to generate ongoing pollution reductions instead of just wrapping bad practices into their budgets and pricing strategies. None of these precautions are in place currently, and yet Bay-related nutrient trading moves forward!

The most sensible course is to forestall trading until these defects and flaws are addressed and resolved. The Bay states should not to barge ahead with an untried experiment but, rather, should create a true regulatory marketplace where trading is allowed, if at all, purely as a last resort and under very stringent terms, instead being the go-to option available to maintain the status quo.

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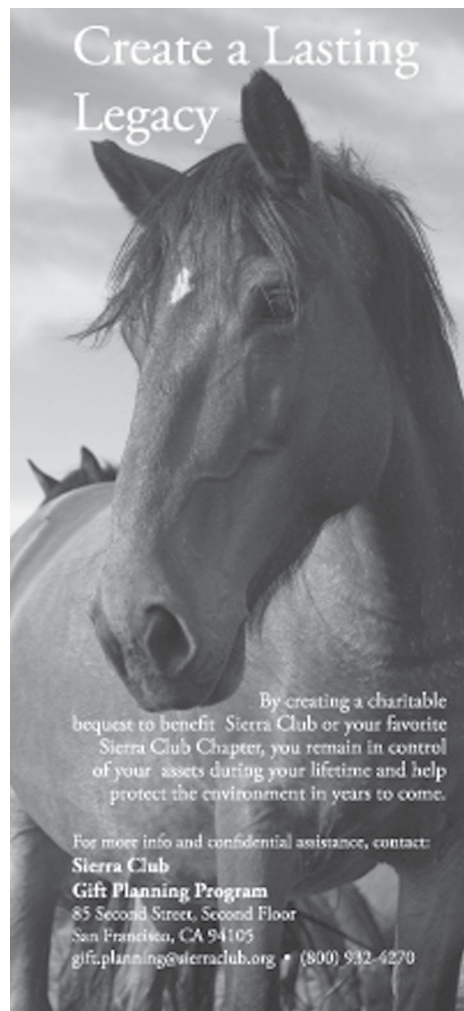


Water vs. Money

(continued from page 16)

This initiative appears to be about raising money, not about saving the environment. The Bay community must ensure that trading does not create consequences that impose unfair burdens on those who live and work close to a violating pollution source, while awarding economic advantages to those marketing credits elsewhere. We need justice and fairness for people and the environment more than we need fresh markets and fresh money. ■

Fred Tutman is a lifelong Marylander who serves as the Patuxent Riverkeeper. He also teaches environmental law and policy at the historic St. Mary's College of Maryland. He authored The Chesapeake Watershed: A Sense of Place and a Call to Action.



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Reasons to Stop the Incinerator

(continued from page 15)

produce. Carroll officials have contacted other counties and perhaps other states in an effort to contract for the waste shortfall.

8. Packaging and materials are changing.

Corporations are finding ways to reduce packaging materials. They are also using recyclable material and collecting their cardboard. Plastics are being created from soybeans and this material is compostable in an anaerobic digester. Paper use is decreasing with the adoption of e-mail, iPads, e-readers and electronic documentation/archive/retrieval.

9. Tire burning.

To make up for the potential loss in waste volumes, Wheelabrator has asked Maryland Department of the Environment MDE to allow them to burn 20,000 tons of tires—2 million tires!—per year.

10. Air pollution.

The incinerator would emit carbon dioxide, acidic pollution (sulfur, hydrochloric acid), nitrogen oxides, particulates, and mercury and lead.

11. Organics and food scraps don't have BTU value.

Biomass, wood and food scraps need to be returned to the earth to enrich the soil.

12. Landfill mining.

Thinking ahead, landfills will be mined as commodity values increase and resources deplete. This is already underway in Florida due to landfill space. Mining landfills with ash would be difficult due to material toxicity. ■

Wildlife Migration Corridors Could Help Plants and Animals Cope with Climate Change

By Marc Imlay—In the article “Warming Planet Pushing Species Out of Habitats Quicker Than Expected” (<http://www.livescience.com/15640-species-shifting-climate-change.html>), Jennifer Welsh comments that “Habitat fragmentation and changing ranges of predators, prey and pollinators (for plants) also influence species’ ability to survive in any specific habitat. If a species can’t reach the next bit of livable habitat, they would be stuck where they are until climate changes led to their extinction.

proaches has been to save an area before it is sold to developers. Lack of awareness that there are many ways to reduce property taxes to affordable levels is one of the most common and unnecessary causes of transfer of natural areas to development. This is particularly important when descendants have difficulty in paying the inheritance and property taxes on inherited land their parents wanted to preserve.

Detailed information for the following abstracts for providing plant and animal

Providing plant and animal wildlife migration corridors is a critical tool in our response to climate change.

You could have a population where effectively you have the living dead,” Thomas said. “You have adult individuals, which are alive, but without recruitment, [the creation of offspring] the individuals die off.”

Providing plant and animal wildlife migration corridors is a critical tool in our response to climate change. Corridors 1,200 feet wide, to include aquatic, riparian and upland habitat, are generally sufficient for most species, based on research studies. Besides habitat being restored or preserved, invasive species and water pollution have to be controlled enough for the plants, animal, and fungi to migrate. Overharvesting (e.g., lumber, menhaden fish, etc.) is another threat which needs to be addressed.

Tools for the creation of migration corridors include Program Open Space, water pollution control, conservation easements, transfer development rights, forest conservation property tax reduction plans, and Smart Growth with a cap at the non-developed location. Smart Growth alternatives to new highways is critical.

One of the most successful ap-

wildlife migration corridors is provided in the Land Preservation Tool Kit.

<http://maryland.sierraclub.org/>
<http://maryland.sierraclub.org/action/p0161.asp>
<http://maryland.sierraclub.org/action/p0384.asp>
<http://maryland.sierraclub.org/action/p0196.asp> ■

Marc Imlay, Ph.D., is a member of the Southern Maryland Group. He represents the group on the chapter excom, and chairs the chapter's Biodiversity, ESA, Invasive Species, and Habitat Stewardship Committee. A conservation biologist by profession, Marc also leads volunteers in restoring natural habitats by indentifying and removing non-native invasive plants. He can be reached at marc.imlay@maryland.sierraclub.org.

Charles County Comprehensive Plan Has Historic Potential

By **Bonnie Bick**—What a difference a handful of votes can make. By slim margins, two progressive candidates—one for the Charles County Board of Commissioners and one for its president—edged out two incumbents in the 2010 primary election, and went on to win the general election two months later. As a result, Charles County's flawed Comprehensive Plan, with its "development district" larger than DC is getting a makeover in full public view, instead of the usual makeup dabbed on in a smoke-filled room.

In Maryland, counties and municipalities develop land-use plans under authority conferred by the state's "Article 66B." Called Comprehensive Plans, or Master Plans, these documents provide a blueprint for urban, residential, and conservation areas that are later implemented with zoning regulations. The plans comprise maps and about a dozen chapters, or "elements" that must address topics ranging from transportation to sensitive areas. While written with a horizon decades away, these plans must be reviewed every six years, and updated if necessary. Elected officials can give broad initial guidance and have the final say, but the "comp plan" is assembled by a standing "planning commission," county planning staff, and hired consultants if necessary.

Because land-use is *the* determining factor in promoting healthy communities and preserving our natural and cultural heritage, Comprehensive Plans acquire critical importance in rapidly growing counties which often have the greatest to lose in terms of natural resources.

By relative measure, Charles is the second fastest growing county in the state. In the past, its unabashedly pro-sprawl policies have earned it dubious honors, like teaching the greatest number of school children in trailers, and losing forest at one of the fastest rates in the state. Tragically, these policies have also turned one of the best tributaries in the Bay,

Mattawoman Creek, into one declining alarmingly as impervious surface and forest loss join in the one-two punch fatal to our waterways. Hence it was welcome news that Charles County would conduct a major revamping of its comp plan.

The revision process was designed to occur transparently and with unusual public outreach. After a kick-off public meeting and a publicly open "marketplace forum" treating the economics of land use, four visioning sessions and four subsequent "design charettes" were held around the county to elicit public input. The local environmental community, as well as members of the Smarter Growth Alliance for Charles County (SGACC), including the Sierra Club, participated actively in these events.

Land Use Scenarios

Three land-use scenarios were devised to capture the broad range of public opinion. These were then condensed to two and presented to the public at an open house on October 19. It was here that lingering concerns over the consultants assisting the county surfaced. The train that had been running smoothly veered toward a wreck, as the two scenarios where needlessly, and inaccurately, portrayed as the environment versus the economy.

Scenario 1 differs dramatically from past visions. While not perfect, it fully protects stream valleys, maps a full priority preservation area, and focuses growth in existing urban centers (but with an ill-advised expansion of Indian Head that would harm Mattawoman and that would curtail leveraging its small-town charm to become a tourism destination). Because it embodies smart growth principles, it affords the best chance to support rail transit to Waldorf, the major urban core, to curtail sprawl, and to foster a successful TDR (Transferred Development Rights) program in which developers gain increased building densities by

compensating rural landowners for preserving their land.

In contrast, Scenario 2 simply rearranges business as usual. It maintains plans to urbanize the environmentally and historically rich western county, includes the Cross County Connector, penetrates rural areas with "villages," some not so small, and shouts inattention to Mattawoman.

The consultants scored the scenarios on criteria of their choosing. Scenario 1 ranked only incrementally better on environmental criteria, while Scenario 2 fared much better on economic and social criteria that were often contrived, narrowly focused, and in many cases, evaluated counter to what is known about smart growth implementations and studies. Excellent reviews of the scenarios by SGACC and the Coalition for Smarter Growth, that would be helpful to many communities in Maryland, are online at smartgrowthcharlescounty.org.

Water Resources Element

A glaring problem with the consultant's evaluation is the inadequate use of the Water Resources Element (WRE), an important new chapter mandated for all comp plans. One component of the WRE

examines the impact of land use on water quality. A succinct outline of this component is on the chapter website at www.maryland.sierraclub.org/uploads/WRE_message_for_web_reduced_size.pdf.

State guidelines would have the WRE embedded early in the revision process so that land-use plans could be iterated until they met pollution targets. According to state guidelines, the WRE should provide "a sound foundation to implement Smart Growth throughout the state." Reneging on earlier promises, the comp-plan consultants paid lip service to the spirit of the WRE, and failed to address a computed increase in pollution loads for both scenarios, even as the county must decrease its loads under the Watershed Implementation Plan.

The consultants will offer a single "preferred scenario" for Charles County's comp plan at a December 15 open house. At the time of writing, the many statewide and local organizations and citizens are on edge, wondering if our environment will be given a long overdue gift of smart growth for the season, or a lump of coal. ■

Bonnie Bick is the Southern Maryland Group Political Chair.



The developments in Charles County demonstrate the high impact of volunteering for the Sierra Club's political activities.

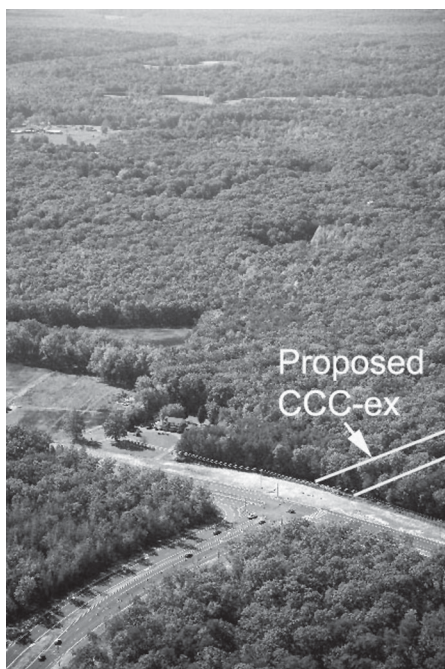
The decision to revise the Comp Plan from top to bottom, and to remove the revision process from behind closed doors for the first time ever, is a direct result of fresh faces on the Board of Commissioners. The two most progressive members of the board won their primaries by just dozens of votes! Such thin margins indicate the Club's political endorsements, political mailings, and pamphleteering made a difference.

To get involved, contact your local group (see page 20 for group leaders)

or call the Maryland Chapter office at (301) 277-7111.

Conservation News: Smart Growth

Crossing Out the Cross County Connector



Aerial view of where the Cross County Connector would extend a four-lane highway into the forested Mattawoman Creek watershed. This intersection already provides a four-lane means to cross the county by driving from the bottom of the view and curving right at the tee. Photo by David Bick.

Thrilling news arrived early in November when the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) denied wetland-destruction permits for Charles County's proposed Cross County Connector, citing a long-inadequate permit application. The highway would have killed faltering Mattawoman Creek, one of the Chesapeake Bay's most productive tributaries, with sprawl development. As a result, the Sierra Club has been a leading voice for protecting Mattawoman, a voice now joined by many others. Efforts gained national attention in 2009, when Mattawoman's plight led American Rivers to declare it the nation's fourth most endangered river.

The highway would also have thwarted Smart Growth in a county well situated to lead the state by example. Following the permit denial, the county received a letter from Rich Hall, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Planning, affirming that the highway was antithetical to Smart Growth and would have "ad-

versely affected" Mattawoman.

More good news arrived the following week when the Charles County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously not to appeal MDE's decision. However, there remains the possibility that, after a board-mandated inter-departmental review aimed at plugging holes in the application, the county could decide to reapply for the permits after only six months. A full review would include a re-evaluation of the highway, and come to the same conclusion as Rich Hall's. Then the Board could initiate more enlightened policies than past administrations, by abandoning a highway aimed at enriching a few land speculators at the expense of all county citizens, and their environment.

In denying the permits, MDE cited a number of persistent gaps in information, some dating back seven years. Previous county administrations were simply incapable of seeing the impacts this highway would visit on Mattawoman Creek, including the degradation of a high quality "Tier II" tributary regulated under the Clean Water Act. Similarly, the federal record shows that these previous administrations steadfastly refused to acknowledge any cumulative impacts of the highway when queried repeatedly by the Army Corps of Engineers.

This victory is the result of legitimate concerns raised by a large number of individuals and organizations, and of regulatory agencies paying greater than usual attention—in 2009, MDE denied only 5 of 1,967 permit applications to alter or destroy wetlands. The effort has lasted years. Its origins lay in the Campaign to Save Chapman Forest when the highway—then the "Western Connector"—was concocted to subsidize the defunct Chapman's Landing mega-development, now Chapman State Park. The Mattawoman Watershed Society and Sierra Club began organizing against the highway in 2006. In 2008, after a boisterous hearing on the proposed alteration

of wetlands and waterways, where many hundreds overwhelmingly opposed the highway, over twenty regional, state, and local groups, of which Sierra Club is a key member, coalesced to form the Smarter Growth Alliance for Charles County (SGACC), guided by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Since then, SGACC has actively opposed the highway while working tirelessly to replace the status quo of sprawl development, epitomized by the proposed highway, with Smart Growth alternatives.

The effort could have far-reaching implications for Smart Growth in Charles County, an apt outcome, given that the purchase of Chapman Forest inspired then-governor Parris Glendening to bring Smart Growth to Maryland. The SGACC's apolitical forums, advertisements, and mailings helped educate voters to a better vision. Charles County's new administration has initiated a complete revamping of its Comprehensive Plan instead of rubber stamping outdated concepts as in the past. Presently, consultants are "merging" two scenarios, one of which contains numerous Smart Growth components. (See article on Charles County Comp Plan update, opposite page.)

A new wetland application for the highway would defy wisdom. Outdated estimates peg the cost of the highway at \$47 million—it will much higher—while other pressing projects go unfunded in Charles County. Taxpayers would be asked to subsidize a sprawl highway that would lower their own home values by enabling the construction of more housing units in an already depressed market. It would make meeting water pollution reduction goals in the watershed more expensive and more difficult, if not impossible.

And, applying anew for the highway would telegraph an egregious lack of concern for one the Chesapeake Bay's best tributaries. When the previous application was made, Mattawoman Creek was

heralded as "the best, most productive tributary to the Bay" by state fisheries biologists. These same scientists now find that Mattawoman is suffering, prompting the sobering conclusion that "planned levels of development should be reconsidered in light of the extent of declines detected in the fish community."

As we await the outcome of Charles County's decision to reapply or not, many are working for a new Comprehensive Plan that embraces Smart Growth, and thus abandons subsidizing sprawl development with unneeded highways. In the meantime, the environmental community can stand proud of our efforts readying the coffin for this very bad idea. ■

This piece was submitted by the Mattawoman Watershed Society.

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Maryland Chapter and Group Leaders

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ron Henry, Chapter Chair, Greater Balto. Del.
443-474-7449
Ron.Henry@mdsierra.org

David O'Leary, Vice Chair, At-Large Del. (2010)
dave.oleary@mdsierra.org

Erin Barnes, At-Large Del. (2011)
202-236-0145
ebarnesjd@gmail.com

Betsy Johnson, At-Large Del. (2010)
301-656-4948
betsy.johnson@mdsierra.org

Rich Reis, At-Large Del. (2011)
301-384-0540
rreis@verizon.net

Amanda Ruthven, At-Large Del. (2010)
240-786-6137; 443-481-7984
amandaruthven@rushpost.com

Baird Straughan, At-Large Del. (2011)
410-757-4134
baird.straughan@mdsierra.org

David Prosten, Anne Arundel Del.
dprosten@yahoo.com

Dan Andrews, Catoctin Del.
410-857-4129
dooze@qis.net

Don Grace, Eastern Shore Del.
don.grace@mdsierra.org

Kathleen Sheedy, Howard Del.
410-505-4528
Kathleen.Sheedy@Maryland.Sierraclub.org

David Hauck, Montgomery Del.
301-270-5826
David.hauck@Maryland.sierraclub.org

Alex Hirtle, Pr. Geo's Del.
Chair.PG@mdsierra.org
301-927-2105

Marc Imlay, Southern MD Del.
301-283-0808
marc.imlay@maryland.sierraclub.org

Sam White, Western MD Del.
301-264-4162
sam.white@Maryland.Sierraclub.org

GROUP CHAIRS

ANNE ARUNDEL GROUP
David Prosten
410-263-6341 or 410-703-0847
dprosten@yahoo.com

CATOCTIN GROUP (CARROLL, FREDERICK, WASHINGTON COUNTIES.)
Dan Andrews
410-857-4129
dooze@qis.net

EASTERN SHORE GROUP (CECIL COUNTY AND EASTERN SHORE COUNTIES)
Don Grace
410-352-3722
don.grace@mdsierra.org

GREATER BALTIMORE GROUP (BALTIMORE CITY AND COUNTY, HARFORD COUNTY)
Chris Yoder
410-466-2462
cncyoder@comcast.net

HOWARD COUNTY GROUP
Ken Clark
301-725-3306
kenclark7@live.com

MONTGOMERY COUNTY GROUP
Alvin Carlos
alvin.carlos@maryland.sierraclub.org

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GROUP
Alex Hirtle
Chair.PG@mdsierra.org
301-927-2105

SOUTHERN MARYLAND GROUP (CALVERT, CHARLES, AND ST. MARY'S COUNTIES)
Meredith Sweet
meredith.sweet@verizon.net

WESTERN MARYLAND GROUP (ALLEGANY AND GARRETT COUNTIES)
Sam White
301-264-4162
sam.white@Maryland.Sierraclub.org

ISSUES CHAIRS

David O'Leary, Conservation Chair
dave.oleary@mdsierra.org

Chris Yoder, Conservation Co-Chair
410-466-2462
Chris.Yoder@mdsierra.org

Sam White, Agriculture, CAFO, True Cost of Food (True Cost of Food) Chair
301-264-4162,
sam.white@maryland.sierraclub.org

Cliff Terry, Campaign Finance Reform Chair
410-944-9477
cliff.terry@maryland.sierraclub.org

Charlie Garlow, Air Quality Chair
301-593-9823
charlie.garlow@juno.com

Marc Imlay, Biodiversity, ESA, Invasive Species, and Habitat Stewardship Chair
301-283-0808
marc.imlay@maryland.sierraclub.org

David O'Leary, Global Warming, Cool Cities Chair
dave.oleary@mdsierra.org

Rich Reis, Energy Chair
301-384-0540
rreis@verizon.net

Bonnie Bick, Environmental Justice Chair, Mattawoman Campaign Chair
240-493-4919
bonnie.bick@maryland.sierraclub.org

Caroli Mullen, Blue Green Alliance
410-366-6953
carolimullen@verizon.net

Chris Yoder, National Wilderness/Refuges/Mining Chair
410-466-2462
Chris.Yoder@mdsierra.org

Kim Birnbaum, Pesticides Chair
410-379-1075
Kim.Birnbaum@maryland.sierraclub.org

Cliff Terry, Population Chair
410-944-9477
cliff.terry@maryland.sierraclub.org

Sam B. Hopkins, Population Vice Chair
410-554-0006
sbh@hopkinsandassociates.com

Earl Bradley, Right Whale Chair
410-224-3236
earlbradley@verizon.net

Fred Tutman, Stormwater Mgmt. Chair
301-249-8200 ext 7
fred@paxriverkeeper.org

Steve Cafilisch, Transportation Chair
301-654-3288
steve.cafilisch@maryland.sierraclub.org

Ed Merrifield, Water Quality Chair
202-222-0707
ed@potomacriverkeeper.org

Carol Nau, Watershed Chair
Nau.carol@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Erin Barnes, Council Del.
202-236-0145
ebarnesjd@gmail.com

Baird Straughan, Fundraising Chair
410-757-4134
baird.straughan@mdsierra.org

Chris Bryan, Legislative Chair
410-326-3720, 443-404-6907
Chris.bryan@mdsierra.org

Jan Hoffmaster, Outings Chair
Jan.Hoffmaster@mdsierra.org

Mike Pretl, PAC Treasurer
mikepretl@aol.com

David Hauck, Political Chair
301-270-5826
David.hauck@Maryland.sierraclub.org

Charlie Garlow, Political Compliance Officer
charlie.garlow@juno.com

Clay Birkett and Steve Lonker, Postmasters
postmaster@maryland.sierraclub.org

Nancy Hammond, Treasurer
nancy.hammond@mdsierra.org

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Leaders

←continued

Laura Glass, Assistant Treasurer
laura.glass@mdsierra.org

Rick Andrews, Webmaster
andrews4art@yahoo.com

ACTIVITIES SECTIONS CONTACTS

Kathy Harget, Baltimore Outdoor Sierrans
410-440-9896
youngsierrans@gmail.com

Bob Burchard & Nicole Veltre
Baltimore Inner City Outings Chairs
baltimoreinnercityoutings@gmail.com

CHAPTER STAFF

Welcome to new chapter staff

Chris Hill
and
Josh Tulkin

Josh Tulkin, Chapter Director
josh.tulkin@mdsierra.org
301-277-7111

Laurel Imlay, Chapter Coordinator
laurel.imlay@sierraclub.org
301-277-7111

Claudia Friedetzky, Chapter Conservation Representative (water issues)
Claudia.Friedetzky@mdsierra.org
301-277-7111

Chris Hill, Chapter Conservation Representative (energy issues)
chris.hill@sierraclub.org
301-277-7111

Office: 7338 Baltimore Avenue, #111
College Park, MD 20740
Tel: 301-277-7111, Fax: 301-277-6699
<http://maryland.sierraclub.org>

Primary Elections

April 3 Is a Great Day to Vote in the Maryland Primary!

By **Betsy Johnson**—Did you know that many critical races in the state are decided in the primary? I'm sorry to say that only about half of our Maryland members vote in the primary. Here are some reasons why primaries are so important:

- ♦ Many of the races are decided in the primary because many of our districts are overwhelmingly Democratic or Republican.
- ♦ Redistricting this year will make some districts up for grabs. As I write this, I'm hearing about individuals who might be running for the Democratic nomination in District 6 (which includes the Maryland panhandle and east of it). And there may be challenges to sitting U.S. Representatives in other districts. We've heard that Glen Ivey will be challenging Donna Edwards, and perhaps others will also be challenging Edwards—and in a redistricting year no one is really safe. Your vote in such instances will count for so much more in the primary than in the general election.

- ♦ Your voting after considering the Sierra Club's recommendations gives the Sierra Club political clout.

- ♦ We are privileged to be able to vote in democratic elections. We should take every opportunity to exercise that privilege.

- ♦ We need to vote to diminish corporate influence over our political process.

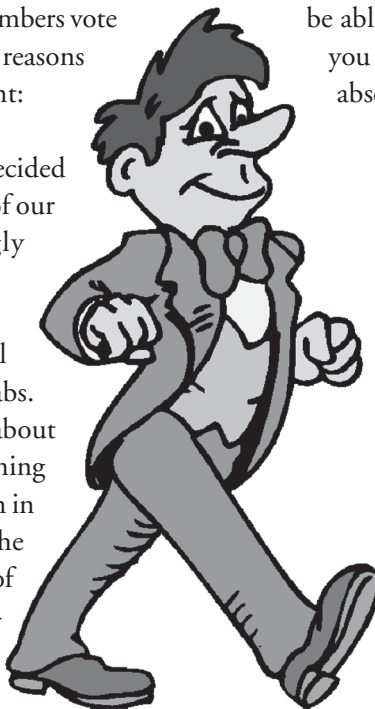
I hope these reasons will convince every single one of you to come out and vote on April 3 or during the early voting period from March 24-29. Now that early voting is in force, there's no excuse not to vote. You have many opportunities to get to the polls. See MDEarlyVote.com for

more information on when and where you can vote during early voting (March 24-29). If you think you won't be able to vote on April 3, you can either request an absentee ballot or vote early at one of the

lot is March 27. You can find more information about absentee ballots and early voting by calling your local election office. The phone number for your local election office is at http://www.elections.state.md.us/about/county_boards.html.

For answers to other questions about the primary election on April 3, go to: <http://www.elections.state.md.us>. ■

Betsy Johnson is the former political chair of the Maryland Chapter.



designated early voting locations. The deadline for requesting an absentee bal-

Vote as if the fate of the earth depends on it—because it does.

Help Wanted!

Chapter Legislative Chair

The Maryland Chapter has a team that works on our legislative priorities in Annapolis each year. But the committee chair is moving on after this legislative session, and we need someone to lead and coordinate these efforts. The team is the busiest between January and April. Getting involved during this session would ease the transition. If you have questions or are interested in volunteering, please contact Chris Bryan at chris.bryan@mdsierra.org. Thanks!

Outings (General Information)

Get Outdoors and Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet

Sierra Club outings are open to everyone, members and non-members alike. Each outing is intended to be a wholesome, safe, and enjoyable experience in the outdoors. Participants must have proper clothing, equipment, and stamina suitable to the event, and are encouraged to select activities that match their individual abilities for outdoor adventures.

The Club offers a variety of outings from “easy” to “strenuous” that suit all activity levels. The difficulty of each outing is clearly designated in the announcement. Reservations are generally not required for a local outing unless noted, but the outing leader should be contacted in advance for questions about the terrain, the difficulty or duration of the trip, recommended clothing, footwear and equipment. Activities are normally held “rain or shine,” but may be postponed at the leader’s discretion for safety reasons in the event of inclement weather.

Potential participants are reminded that all outdoor activities carry a degree of risk, and some take place in locations where professional emergency medical aid may be two or more hours away. People with health concerns should consult a physician to determine the advisability of participating in these or similar activities. The Club outing leader is responsible for the safety of all participants, and has the final authority to decide whether or not an individual may participate on a specific outing. Sierra Club safety policy requires that helmets be worn on bicycling outings. Also, any participant must wear a personal flotation device (PFD) on outings using personal watercraft such as kayaks or canoes.

Unless noted in the announcement, Club outings are intended for adults. Children and dogs are not normally not

permitted, unless an outing is so designated. Even on outings that are designated as child/dog friendly, please contact the leader in advance before bringing minors or pets. Minors (under 18 years of age) must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian, or they must have both 1) a signed permission slip, and 2) the leader’s prior consent to participate in the Club outing. Dogs must be non-aggressive, well-behaved, and on a leash.



Sierra Club outings officially begin and end at the trailhead, paddlecraft put-in/take-out point, or some other similar designated locality near the activity. Travel to the official starting point and back, even from an advertised meeting place, is the sole responsibility of each participant. While the Club encourages car-pooling, such arrangements are strictly between the riders and the drivers, and are not a part of the outing. Participants assume full responsibility and liability for all risks associated with such travel.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver, which can be viewed on the web at <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/index.asp>. Sierra Club local outings are free of charge, although payment of park entrance fees, a share of campsite rental costs, permit fees, equipment rental charges, etc. may be required from the participants. Such costs are specified in the announcement whenever possible.

The Sierra Club practices “leave-no-trace” trail techniques, including hiking and camping on durable surfaces, minimizing campfire impacts, packing out all trash, respecting wildlife, being considerate of other visitors, and leaving the environment as it was found. ■

Abbreviations Used

Most outings in the Maryland Chapter are run at the group level, with a few chapter and inter-chapter events. The group originating the outing is identified in parentheses by the leader’s name. These and other abbreviations used are listed below:

AA:	Anne Arundel Group
AMC:	Appalachian Mountain Club
AT:	Appalachian Trail
BLM:	Bureau of Land Management
CCA:	Canoe Cruisers Association (Washington, D.C.)
CG:	Catoctin Group
C&O:	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal
FFA:	Family Friendly Activity (kids/dogs ok, but check with leader)
FWS:	(U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service
GB:	Greater Baltimore Group
GWNF:	George Washington Natl. Forest
HC:	Howard County Group
JNF:	Jefferson Natl. Forest
MNF:	Monongahela Natl. Forest
MC:	Montgomery County Group
NPS:	Natl. Park Service
NRA:	Natl. Recreation Area
NWR:	Natl. Wildlife Refuge
PFD:	Personal Flotation Device (lifejacket)
PRO:	Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings (SCPRO)*
SF:	State Forest
SM:	Southern MD Group
SP:	State Park
SNP:	Shenandoah Natl. Park

* For hike ratings of SCPRO, refer to their website at <http://www.sierrapotomac.org/rating.htm>

Attention Outings Leaders!

The national Sierra Club is in the process of testing a new online activity publishing system. This system will permit outings leaders to enter their planned outings directly into a website database which will then be available on the club website.

To have access to this system you must be listed in the Sierra Club WILD (Web Interactive Leader Directory) database, or the subset of WILD which is called LEADERS (Leader & Event Recording System).

Group and chapter chairs, etc. are listed in WILD but the Outings Leaders are listed in LEADERS. If you’re a Maryland Outings Leader, you can take advantage of this new online activity publishing system by getting your name listed in LEADERS.

Contact your group outings chair, the chapter outings intern at Outings.Intern@mdsierra.org, or the chapter outings chair at Jan.Hoffmaster@mdsierra.org, to have your name added to the LEADERS database. The info you will need is: 1) the date of your most recent Outings Leader Training, and 2) the date of your first aid certification.

The chapter has just initiated the system and it can be viewed at <http://maryland.sierraclub.org/events/ActivitySearch.asp>. For instructions on how to log onto the system see <http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org/communications/web/support/activities/>

Outings (December)



Sat. Dec. 10. Gambrill State Park, MD. Moderate 7 mile hike on wooded trails, with several scenic overlooks. Bring lunch and water. Meet at the Bagel Bin off Rt. 40 in the Enchanted Forest Shopping Center, for a 9:00 departure. Call Tim Ryan before 9:30 PM, 410-248-2974, timothy.a.ryan@urs.com.

Sat Dec 10. Rated C. Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve. Moderate circuit hike of approximately 8 miles with 2100 feet elevation change. We will hike along a stream to the ruins of a mill, then up to cliffs overlooking the Virginia piedmont. For more information visit www.brmconservancy.org/trail_map.htm. Meet at Vienna Metro at 8:30am. Leaders: Marcia Wolf, 301/565-3165 before 9pm or marcia.wolf@verizon.net.

Sat. Dec. 10. Rated H. Pine Hill Gap Circuit Hike. Circuit Hike starting a Pine Hill Gap Trail and descending Hot Short Mountain to Nicholson Hollow Trail. After lunch at Corbin Cabin, we will proceed over Robinson Mountain and return via Weakley Fire Road through Nethers. About 16 miles with a 3500 feet elevation gain. Meet at Oakton Shopping Center at 7:30. Inexperienced hikers call for hiker requirements. Leader William Needham, 410/884-9127 or Needham82@aol.com.

Sat. Dec. 10. Bear Branch Nature Park. We will walk the white and yellow trails, approximately 3.5 miles (2.5 hours). Trails are mostly through second growth forest, rolling hills, and stream area. There is also a birds of prey display along the way. The

address is 300 John Owings Road, Westminster, MD. From travelling north on MD 97, make a right on John Owings road, travel 1.5 miles, turn left onto Hashawha Rd., travel 1/4 mile to Bear Branch Nature Center on right. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot. For questions, contact Karen at: karen@lunafiberarts.com; 443-789-1638.

Sun. Dec. 11. Rated C. Sugarloaf Mountain. Moderate 7 mile winter hike to one of our most scenic close-in hikes. This is also a birthday hike – for all trip leaders and participants who have birthdays in December. Meet at 9am at Shady Grove Metro – East side by Metro tunnel. Leaders: Bob Goldberg 301/540-2915 (before 9pm), Frank Wodarczyk 703/569-6737, Carol Ivory carolivory@verizon.net, and Christine Ford 703/425-6899.

Sun. Dec. 11: Great Falls Billy Goat Trail, MD. Moderate 7 mile hike on trails near the Potomac River, with short rock scrambles on the Billy Goat Trail. Enjoy dramatic scenery and observe wildlife. Bring lunch and water. Depart at 9:00 from the west lot of the Broken Land Parkway Park & Ride at Rt. 32. Call Ken Clark, 443-280-4050, kenclark7@live.com.

Sun. Dec 11. Rated D. Mason Neck State Park. Approximately 13 miles with rolling hills for elevation change. Bring your binoculars to look for bald eagles and other waterbirds! Great views of the Potomac and surrounding marshes. Meet at 9am at Huntington Avenue Metro parking lot (surface parking lot - at the end closest to the parking garage). Leader: Liz Guertin, 202/415-4639 (before 9pm) for information, or eguertin@yahoo.com.

Sat. Dec. 17. Rated E. Potomac Heritage Trail: Algonkian Park to Difficult Run, eastern Loudoun and western Fairfax counties, VA. Moderately paced 12-mile linear hike with 2,000 feet of elevation change along Potomac River. Meet 8am at Difficult Run Stream Valley Park parking lot, south side of Rt. 193, three miles west of I-495, just east of entrance into Great Falls Park. Leader: Russ Norfleet, 703/501-7953 or russnorfleet@verizon.net.

Sat. Dec. 17. Clifford Hollow, Frederick Municipal Forest (FMF), MD. Moderate 9 mile circuit hike through Gambrill State Park and the southern portion of FMF. 1600 feet of elevation gain. Bring lunch and boots. Depart at 9:00 from the park & ride just north of I-70 on Rt. 32. Contact Mike Juskelis, 410-439-4964, mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

Sun. Dec. 18. Rated A. Cold Weather Art Walk (Get to Know DC). Winter arts walk through DC. We will walk approximately 5 miles, stopping to see the "Ocean Soul" exhibit at the National Geographic Museum; the "More than Meets the Eye" exhibit at the Museum of Natural History, "Conversations with the Earth" at the American Indian Museum (where we'll also have lunch); and one more TBA, check back in November. Leader: Liz Guertin, 202/415-4639 (before 9pm) for information, or eguertin@yahoo.com.

Sun. Dec. 18: McKeldin area, Patapsco State Park. Moderate 4 mile hike along the Patapsco River, past McKeldin Falls. Optional restaurant lunch after the hike. Meet at the Bagel Bin off Rt. 40 in the Enchanted Forest Shopping Center, for a 9:00 departure. Call

James Perschy, 410-964-1902, jameshike@verizon.net.

Wed. Dec. 21 GB – Easy. Hampden Holiday Hike – Evening. 3 miles. Celebrate the first day of winter on an evening tour of Hampden's famous holiday decorations on 34th Street. Hike will continue through other interesting areas including an art district and the "Avenue." Time will be allowed for browsing through shops. Wear comfortable but sturdy footwear as sidewalks are uneven in places. Hike will leave from the Rotunda, on 40th Street and Keswick. Meet at 6 PM by the tables near the indoor movie theater. (Older children welcome but might not be suitable for dogs.) Cancelled for steady rain or storms. For more details, call Alan at 443-212-5082 or email apenczek@stevenson.edu.

Sun. Dec. 25. Rated C. Christmas on Sugarloaf. A 6+ mile circuit hike with 2,200 ft. of elevation change on nearby Sugarloaf Mountain. Highlights include multiple views of the Potomac Valley and the Catoctin Mountains, as well as parts of our capital, and lunch at the summit. To carpool, meet at 10am at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Kiss & Ride. Leader: Mike Darzi, michael.darzi@saic.com or 301/580-9387.

Mon. Dec. 26. Four Ponds/Rock City Loop, Frederick Municipal Forest, MD. Strenuous 11 mile hike with 1400 feet of elevation gain. One challenging stream crossing. Bring lunch and boots. Depart at 9:00 from the park & ride just north of I-70 on Rt. 32. Contact Mike Juskelis, 410-439-4964, mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

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Outings (January, February)

←continued

January

Sun. Jan. 1. Sand Flats/Salamander Circuit, Frederick Municipal Forest, MD. Moderate 10 mile hike with 1000 feet of elevation gain. Bring lunch and boots. Depart at 9:00 from the park & ride just north of I-70 on Rt. 32. Contact Mike Juskelis, 410-439-4964, mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

Sun. Jan. 1 GB – Moderate. Oregon Ridge Park Hike.

5 miles. Celebrate the New Year on this figure-8 hike to Ivy Hill Pond. Some shallow stream crossings. Meet in front of Nature Center at 1 PM. Take I-83 to Shawan Rd. and exit west. After 1 mile turn left at stoplight onto Beaver Dam Rd., then turn immediately onto right fork into park. Follow road to end and walk up to Nature Center. Cancelled for steady rain or storms. For more details, call Alan at 443-212-5082 or email apenczek@stevenson.edu.

Sun. Jan. 1. Rated B. Thirty-Eighth Annual New Year's Day Hike on C&O Canal Towpath. Start 2012 right with a 10-mile stroll/walk along the C&O Canal. Learn about this historic area. Meet at 9:30am on Wisconsin Ave. at the canal, south of M St. in Georgetown. Walk to Little Falls Pump Station (or turn around sooner) and back. Leashed dogs OK. Leaders: Carol Ivory, carolivory@verizon.net, Christine Ford, 703/425-6899 (before 10 pm); Paul Elliott, 202/423-7913.

Sat. Jan. 7: Gunpowder Falls, Hereford. Moderate 7 mile hike over hilly terrain to Prettyboy Dam. Bring lunch and water. Depart Columbia at

9:00 from Long Gate Parkway Park & Ride, off Rt. 100, just east of Rt. 29. Call James Perschy, 410-964-1902, jameshike@verizon.net.

Wed. Jan. 11 GB – Easy. Outings Meeting.

New and prospective outings leaders are welcome to attend a meeting of the Greater Baltimore Group's Outings Committee. Come plan new outings and meet other outings leaders. If you're interested in leading outings and are curious about what is involved, come and talk with the outings leaders. The meeting will be held at the Panera Bread restaurant in Timonium, beginning with dinner and socialization at 6:30 PM in a quiet corner and the meeting to follow at 7:00. From I-83 north, take exit 16 Timonium Rd. east, turn left on York Rd., and turn right at the next light for the Timonium Center across from the State Fairgrounds. Postponed for bad weather. For more information, call Mary at 443-386-0862 or email XxDiTz4LyFxX@aol.com.

Sat. Jan. 14. The Volkswagen Loop, Frederick Municipal Forest, MD. Moderate 7 mile hike with 1200 feet of elevation gain. Bring lunch and boots. Depart at 9:00 from the park & ride just north of I-70 on Rt. 32. Contact Mike Juskelis, 410-439-4964, mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

Sat. Jan. 14. Antietam Battlefield. We will walk the Antietam Remembered trail (1/4 mile) – a paved walkway with monuments and other sites of historical interest and West Woods Trail (1.5 miles) – a woodlot significant in the battle. Easy terrain. The address is 5831 Dunker Church Road, Sharpsburg, MD Traveling west on Interstate 70

from the Baltimore/Washington area, take exit 29 onto Rt. 65 South towards Sharpsburg. Travel about 10 miles south to the Park Visitor Center entrance which will be on your left side. Meet at the Visitors Center Parking lot. For questions, call or email Karen at: karen@lunafiberarts.com; 443-789-1638

Sat. Jan. 21: White Oak Canyon, VA. Strenuous 10 mile hike in Shenandoah National Park, featuring several ice-covered waterfalls. The trail will likely be icy in places. Bring lunch, water, and good hiking boots. Depart at 7:30 from the west lot of the Broken Land Parkway Park & Ride at Rt. 32. Sign up in advance, Ken Clark, 443-280-4050, kenclark7@live.com.

Sat. Jan. 28. Salamander-South Loop, Frederick Municipal Forest, MD. Moderate 6 mile hike with 700 feet of elevation gain. Bring lunch and boots. Depart at 9:00 from the park & ride just north of I-70 on Rt. 32. Contact Mike Juskelis, 410-439-4964, mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

February

Sat. Feb. 4: Sugarloaf Mountain, MD. Moderate 6 or 8 mile hike featuring rocky outcrops with sweeping views. Bring lunch and water. Meet at the Bagel Bin off Rt. 40 in the Enchanted Forest Shopping Center, for a 9:00 departure. Call James Perschy, 410-964-1902, jameshike@verizon.net.

Sat. Feb. 11: Rock Creek Park in D.C. Moderate 8 mile circuit hike

through woods by the creek, with a quick visit to the zoo. Bring lunch and water. Depart at 9:00 from the west lot of the Broken Land Parkway Park & Ride at Rt. 32. Call Tim Ryan before 9:30 PM, 410-248-2974, timothy.a.ryan@urs.com.

Sat. Feb 11. Pine Valley Park/ Charlottes Quest Nature Center, Manchester, MD. This is a nice little hike (approximately 1.5 miles, 1.5-2 hours) in the northwestern part of Carroll County, mostly through second growth forest/pine forest and across old field. Easily hiked in snow. The address is 3400 Wilhelm Lane, Manchester, MD. From MD 27 east, turn right on Rt. 30 (south) in Manchester. Shortly thereafter, make a left on York St. Turn left onto Wilhelm Lane (at the sign on the right labeled Charlotte Quest Nature Center. Drive to the end of Wilhelm Lane. We will meet at the parking lot. For questions, call or email Karen at: karen@lunafiberarts.com; 443-789-1638.

Sat. Feb. 25 GB – Easy to Moderate. Prettyboy Watershed – C.C.C. Trail Hike.

4 mile circuit hike with spurs. Pleasant trail through diverse forest on peninsula of reservoir. Constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Meet at 1 PM at trailhead on Traceys Store Rd. From I-83 take Mt. Carmel Rd. west 3 1/2 mi. to Prettyboy Dam Rd. and turn right. After 1 mi. turn left onto Traceys Store Rd. Continue 1 mi. to parking lot at a bend in the road. Cancelled for steady rain or storms. For more details, call Alan at 443-212-5082 or email apenczek@stevenson.edu.

continued →

Outings (March, April, May)

←continued



Sat. Mar. 10. Catoctin Mountain Park, Thurmont Vista Loop. This is a 2.5 mile, moderate hike (approximately 2 hours), the “high” point being the Thurmont Vista Overlook. The address of the Visitor’s Center is 14707 Park Central Road, Thurmont, MD, however, we will meet at the Wolf Rock Parking lot (the next parking lot down from the Visitors center on Park Central Road). The park is off of Rt. 77 , on Park Central Road. For directions: For questions, call or email Karen at: karen@lunafiberarts.com; 443-789-1638.

Sun. Mar. 25 GB – Moderate. Gunpowder North and South Trails. 5 miles. Enjoy the beginning of spring on this hike that follows portions of the Gunpowder North and South Trails along one of the prettiest sections of river in the state. Long pants and sleeves are recommended to protect against occasional overgrowth. Muddy spots possible. Meet at 1 PM at parking area where Masemore Rd. meets the Big Gunpowder. Take I-83 to Mt. Carmel Rd. and exit west. After one-half mile turn right onto Masemore Rd. Continue 1.5 mi. to parking area after sharp curve and just before bridge. Additional parking across bridge. Cancelled for steady rain or storms. For more details, call Alan at 443-212-5082 or email apenczek@stevenson.edu.



Sun. Apr. 1 GB – Moderate. Jerusalem Mill Hike. 6 – 8 miles. Early spring hike along Little Gunpowder River from Jerusalem Mill headquarters. Meet at 11 AM at Jerusalem Mill parking lot. From I-695 take Belair Rd. (Route 1) north 7.6 miles. Bear right on Jerusalem Road at Bradshaw Road. Follow Jerusalem Road for 1.9 miles to the mill and parking lot, just beyond the river. For more details, call Jack at 410-256-3963.

Sat. Apr. 14. Maryland Heights. 3.5 miles. This is a strenuous hike with a big payoff - to Overlook Cliffs on Maryland Heights, which overlooks Harpers Ferry. We will start from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Parking lot (799 Washington Street, Harpers Ferry, WV), hike the scenic 0.25 mile side trail down to Harpers Ferry historic district, cross the railroad bridge, travel a short distance on the C&O canal, then hike up to the Overlook Cliffs. On the way back, for those interested, we can have a late lunch or enjoy Harpers Ferry museums and shopping. Directions to the ATC from I70 - exit onto US 340 west and travel 20 miles. Cross Potomac River, then cross Shenandoah River. Less than 100 yards after crossing the Shenandoah River, make right onto Union Street, then right turn onto Washington Street. ATC is .25 miles up the hill. For questions, call or email Karen at: karen@lunafiberarts.com; 443-789-1638.

Sat. Apr. 28 GB – Moderate. Little Gunpowder Trail – Jerusalem Mill Downstream. 6 miles. Little Gunpowder Trail from Jerusalem Mill downstream to Kingsville and back, with one side trail. Fine views of river and rapids. Includes visit to Jericho Covered Bridge. Meet at 1 PM at Jerusalem Mill. From I-695 take Belair Rd. (Route 1) north 7.6 miles. Bear right on Jerusalem Road at Bradshaw Road. Follow Jerusalem Road for 1.9 miles to the mill and parking lot, just beyond the river. Cancelled for steady rain or storms. For more details, call Alan at 443-212-5082 or email apenczek@stevenson.edu.



Sat. & Sun. May 19 & 20 GB - Moderate. Car Camping at Caledonia State Park in PA Camping overnight and hiking both days exploring lakes and streams in the Michaux State Forest in southern Pennsylvania. We will hike parts of the Appalachian Trail with some good views. Call Jack for details at 410-256-3963.

Take a Hike



Check the searchable events calendar on the chapter website for outings and events near you:

<http://maryland.sierraclub.org/events/index.asp>



It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on fossil fuels like coal. We need to increase use of clean, renewable energy sources like solar and wind.

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Card Number _____
Exp. Date ____/____/____
Signature _____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not 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 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club,
P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

or visit our website www.sierraclub.org F94Q W _____

Outings (BICO)

BICO Baltimore Inner City Outings

Sierra Club Inner City Outings (ICO) is a community outreach program providing opportunities for urban youth and adults to explore, enjoy and protect the natural world. It was founded in 1999 with the goal of providing under-served Baltimore City youth with educational, enjoyable and safe outdoor experiences at no cost to them. Since start-up, Baltimore ICO (BICO) has conducted more than 350 outings serving over 3,000 youngsters.

BICO provides environmental education and promotes respect for the outdoors; teamwork and leadership skills ; and a community service ethic.

BICO's outings in and around Baltimore include nature hikes & orienteering; camping, canoeing, cycling & caving; initiative and confidence coursework; community service for Baltimore's Recreation & Parks Department.

For more information, please send inquiries to baltimoreinnercityoutings@gmail.com, or visit our web site at <http://ico.sierraclub.org/baltimore>.

Schedule

Saturday, December 10

All day CGCC Trip TBD

Wednesday, December 14

2:00pm Paul's Place - Snow Tubing at WhiteTail

Saturday, January 7, 2012

8:30am SBCS - Carrie Murray Nature Center at Leaking Park and Challenge Course with Outward Bound

Saturday, January 14, 2012

8:00am PP/DHHS MDE Lab Outing

Abbreviations:

CGCC: College Gardens Community Center

PP: Paul's Place

DHHS: Digital Harbor High School

SWC: Southwest Baltimore Charter School

Get an inside look at BICO! Read BICO Chair Nicole Veltre-Luton's story, "Out of the City and Into the Woods" on page 1.

Backyard Environmentalism

Backyard Forest Workshop

Saturday, January 14, 2012

Are you interested in learning how better manage the natural areas on your property or convert some lawn into natural area? If so, you are invited to participate in the upcoming workshop, "The Woods in Your Backyard."

Small lots are important in Maryland. A vast majority of landowners have less than 10 acres. This land, wooded or not, is a vital resource for all of us. By enhancing or creating natural areas and woodland on these small lots, the landowner can enjoy recreation, aesthetics, wildlife, and improve water quality.

This one day workshop is designed to provide the basic of forest and wildlife management for small acreage property owners. Participants will learn how to make their woodland work for them. Owners of just a few acres can make a positive difference in their environment and may also discover income earning opportunities through planning and implementing simple stewardship practices.

There will be a special focus on converting lawn to natural areas. If a landowner's lot connects with other lots, there is ample opportunity to make an even larger impact by getting neighbors involved. Workshop participants will learn:

- ♦ Why they should manage their land
- ♦ How to map their land and what to do with it
- ♦ How their land relates to the land around it
- ♦ How to identify land management units on their property
- ♦ The basics of tree identification forestry, and wildlife habitat management
- ♦ How to assess the property's water resources, recreational possibilities, aesthetic appeal and ways to improve each

- ♦ How to convert excess lawn area to natural areas
- ♦ How to choose a few land management projects to help meet their goals, and
- ♦ How to set a timetable and mark progress

The workshop will be held on **Saturday, January 14, 2012** from 9 am to 3 pm. Registration begins at 8:30 am. The class will be held at the University of Maryland Extension (UME), Carroll County Office, 700 Agriculture Center Drive, Westminster, MD 21157.

The registration fee for the entire course is \$35 per individual and includes materials, morning refreshments and lunch. Workshop participants will receive a full color 130 page manual, *The Woods in Your Backyard*, as a program reference, and a CD.

A brochure/registration form and agenda can be found on UME's Forest Stewardship Education Events page, www.naturalresources.umd.edu/Events.html#WBY. Those interested in the information or in attending can visit the website or contact UM Forestry Extension educator Jonathan Kays at jkays@umd.edu, or Donna Davis at the Carroll County Forestry Board, 410-848-9290, or email, dldavis@dnr.state.md.us.

Registrations are due by Friday January 6, 2012. Please make all checks payable to CCEAC and send to UM Extension, Attention WIYBY Workshop, 700 Agriculture Center Drive, Westminster, MD 21157.

Thanks from Michael Brune,
Executive Director of the
Sierra Club

Thank you for helping us explore,
enjoy, and protect the planet this year.
With your support, we've achieved
some impressive victories in 2011.

This year, our Beyond Coal Campaign
reached a milestone - we won new
protections from dangerous air pollu-
tion and stopped the 150th new coal
plant from opening since we launched
our campaign. Together, we are mak-
ing major strides in replacing this dirty
energy with solar and wind power.

We also saved more than a million
acres in Grand Canyon National Park
from mineral exploration and mining.
You – along with 1.4 million other
Sierra Club members and supporters –
spoke out for America's environment.
Your voices were heard, and you made
a difference.

As we gear up for another year of
fighting to protect our most precious
wild places and wildlife, as well as to
defend everyone's right to clean air,
safe water, and a sustainable future, we
are grateful for your continued support.

**For everything you do – thank you
from everyone at the Sierra Club.**

Have a happy and healthy holiday
season!

Maryland Chapter Excom Ballot

*Leaders of the Sierra Club are chosen democratically from candidates who
volunteer their time and talent to protect our Earth.
Please honor this democratic tradition and their willingness to serve by voting.*

**All Maryland Chapter members are eligible
to vote.**

**Vote for no more than three (3) candidates.
(Read candidates' statements on pages 3-4)**

Clip this ballot and return to:

Election Committee
Maryland Chapter/Sierra Club
Suite 111
7338 Baltimore Avenue
College Park, MD 20740

Ballots must be received by January 9, 2012.

Joint Member
Only

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> David O'Leary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Karen Moody |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Don Grace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Ron Henry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> David Hauck |



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Credits

The Chesapeake is published quarterly by the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club. Annual Sierra Club membership dues pay for subscription to this publication. Non-members may subscribe for \$20.00 per year.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are in general aligned with those of the environmental community in Maryland but are strictly those of the authors and not necessarily official policy of local, state or national Sierra Club entities. The Sierra Club prides itself on being a grassroots volunteer organization. The concerns and opinions of all its members are welcome in these pages.

Items for publication are best submitted by email to <maryland.chapter@sierraclub.org> or <laurel.imlay@sierraclub.org> with "For Chesapeake" and title in subject line. Items must include the author's address and telephone numbers. Material may be edited for length, content or clarity at the discretion of the editor. Photographs, illustrations and other works of art are welcome. Materials cannot be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Change of address: send address changes to the Sierra Club, 85 Second Street (2nd Floor), San Francisco, California 94705-3441. For fastest service, please include your old and new addresses along with your 8-digit membership number. For local membership information contact the Maryland Chapter Office 301-277-7111 or write: Maryland Chapter/Sierra Club, 7338 Baltimore Ave (Suite 101A), College Park, MD 20740.

Advertising: For display and classified advertising rates and information, contact:
Editor, *Chesapeake*
Sierra Club Maryland Chapter
7338 Baltimore Ave, Suite 111
College Park, MD 20740

The Maryland Chapter wishes to thank those who contributed to this issue of *Chesapeake*.

Writers and Contributors: Nicole Veltre-Luton, Marta Vogel, Janis Oppelt, Ron Henry, Dan Andrews, Don West, F. Sypher, Richard Reis, Alex Hirtle, Chandler Sherman, Chris Hill, Sarah Peters, David O'Leary, Carolyn Eader, Fred Tutman, Marc Imlay, Bonnie Bick, the Mattawoman Watershed Society, Betsy Johnson, Michael Brune

Editors: Betty Brody, Mary Corddry, Donna Engle, Becky French, Ron Henry, Laurel Imlay, Betsy Johnson, David O'Leary, Cindy Peré, Richard Reis, D. Tewell

Outings Editor: Jan Hoffmaster

When it comes to grassroots, the Sierra Club is the real deal. Our chapter is run and energized by volunteers who give their time and talents to protect the environment in Maryland.

Some of our members jump into activism as soon as they pay their first year's dues to the Club. Others become active when the degradation of the environment touches them personally: a beloved child develops asthma due to air pollution; a neighborhood is identified as a potential site for a gas tank storage terminal; a favorite fishing place is depleted when toxic runoff overwhelms the creek.

This issue of *Chesapeake* is about volunteering, and, more important, about volunteers. Inside you'll find stories of what prompted a few of our many volunteers to ask "what can I do about this?" and then get busy doing it. We hope you'll find this issue interesting and inspiring. We hope you'll be moved to contact your group leader, or the chapter office, and ask what you can do.

You've already demonstrated a commitment to a healthy and healthful environment by joining the Sierra Club. Please, don't stop there. We've got work to do, and we need for you to help us do it. The green energy that powers the Sierra Club is yours!

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The Sierra Club Runs on Green Energy: Yours!

INSIDE

Out of the city and into the woods with teachers and teens

Weeds, waste, and water, and people who care about them

Once a tree hugger, always a tree hugger

Town halls generate excitement

Many, many reasons why incinerating waste is a very bad idea

Gettting jazzed up at the Jamboree

Primary day in Maryland is April 3, but Maryland Chapter Excom Elections are right now. Meet the candidates and mark your ballots!

Outings, volunteer opportunities, events, and much more!