



GREAT WATERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

WWW.GREATWATERSGROUP.ORG greatwatersgroupsc@gmail.com

Winter 2020 NO. 4

Holiday party will be virtual but fun goes on

Join us for our annual Great Waters Group Holiday Party and Fundraiser on Sunday, Dec. 6, at 6:30 p.m. Since all in-person Sierra Club events are canceled through the rest of 2020, we're going virtual this year, but you'll still get a chance to "see" your friends, have some fun with a virtual game, and to enjoy local musical talent at this free event.

The musical entertainment is one of the party's highlights, and this year will be no exception. Seasoned performers "Patty and Craig" will join our virtual event and entertain us with their harmonies, humor, and original songs.

Aladdin has been providing delicious Middle Eastern food for our Holiday Party for many years. This year we ask that you support Aladdin, and we've worked out a special meal for you! From Nov. 29 through Dec. 6, call Aladdin and ask for the "Sierra Club Special," which will include Mediterranean salad, pita, hummus or baba ghanouj, chicken and a choice of basmati or Egyptian rice. The price is \$10.75.

Aladdin-Taste of the East is at the Milwaukee Public Market, 400 N. Water St. Call (414) 271-0400 or see www.aladdinsmke.com for hours.

We're taking a break from the silent auction this year, but we encourage you to support the GWG through our 50 for 50 campaign. The GWG is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, and we're hoping you will be one of 50 people to launch us into another 50 years of working to explore, enjoy and protect Wisconsin.

The money helps support GWG monthly programs, newsletters, Earth Day events and community outreach. The proceeds will be split evenly with the Nearby Nature program, which
(Continued on page 6)



The duet Patty and Craig, AKA Patty Stevenson and Craig Siemsen, will provide the musical entertainment for this year's Holiday Party.

COVID outbreak shows voting is vital

*By Eric Hansen
Conservation Chair*

"Our future generations count on our vote. Our collective well-being is at stake. It is time to power up for change."

— Winona LaDuke, Ojibwe leader and author

Elections have consequences, and the current COVID-19 situation in Wisconsin is a vivid illustration of just how far reaching those consequences can be.

Wisconsin (population 5.85 million) had more COVID-19 patients hospitalized in intensive care units on Sept. 23 than all of Canada (population 37.8 million). Former journalist James
(Continued on page 3)

Notes from the Chair

I hope this finds you all healthy and safe.

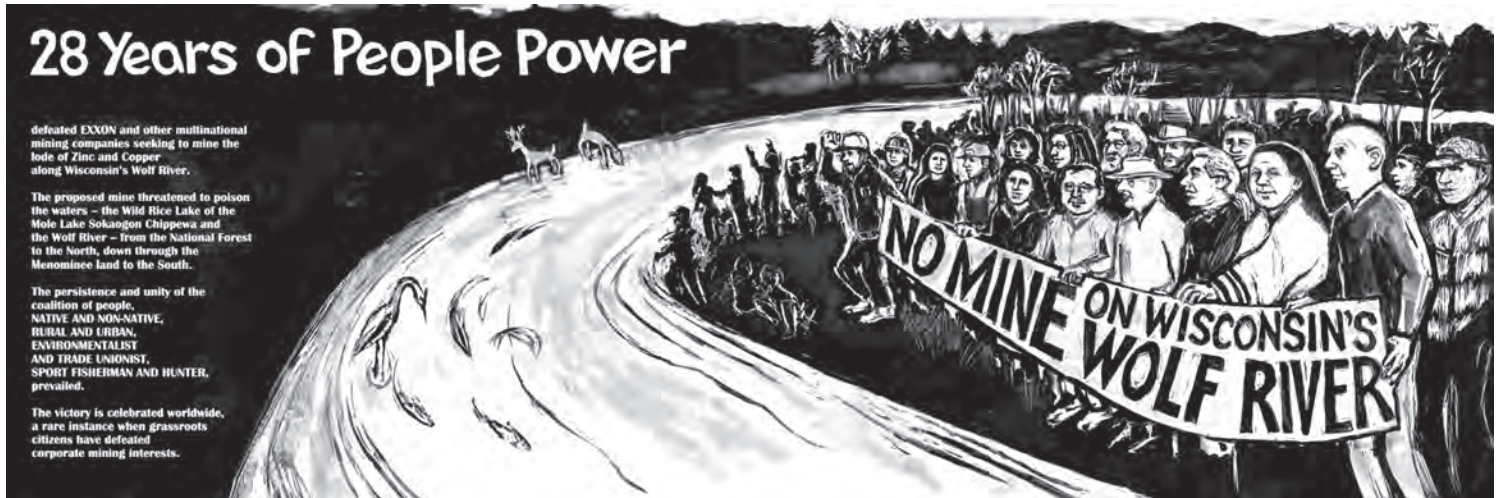
What a wild ride 2020 has been so far! It's been exhausting and revealing, among other adjectives.

I've had many new online platforms to learn to use, both for Sierra Club and for my "day jobs." I never dreamed that caring for the health of oneself and others by the relatively simple expedients of wearing face masks, maintaining physical distance and socializing outdoors in small groups could be

suffused with such a variety of meanings.

As you can see in the remainder of the newsletter, through it all your Great Waters Group Volunteer Leadership Council has been working hard, but in different ways than usual. I am honored to serve with them.

Don't forget to vote on Nov. 3 from 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. if you haven't voted by mail already. This election is critical for the environment. You may obtain information about early voting in your municipality or any other details needed at myvote.wi.gov.



Artist Susan Bietila depicted the continuing determination of environmentalists to stop mining companies from threatening the Wolf and Menominee Rivers.

Company abandons Wolf River site

By Eric Hansen
Conservation Chair

The company that was considering constructing a mine near the headwaters of the Wolf River has announced that it will

not pursue further exploration of minerals there, but it didn't rule out resuming it in the future.

The last Great Waters newsletter outlined the ferocious response to proposals for mines that would threaten the Wolf and Menominee rivers. The issue received more attention in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, and days later Eric Quigley, a consultant for Badger Minerals, wrote in an email, "While the company doesn't have any immediate plans for additional drilling on this parcel it is possible that additional exploration work (including drilling) may take place in the future."

Residents breathed a sigh of relief. However, Ron James, who owns land in Langlade County downriver of the Oneida County site, told WXPB-FM in Rhinelander, "It's a temporary reprieve because the laws that created this project in the first place are still in the books."

James would like to see the law that allows for the mining in the area to be repealed. See more at bit.ly/3jPICgj.

The Sierra Club will continue to work to fight mines that put our waters at risk.

Some dates to remember

Here are some important dates for GWG members to keep in mind in the coming months.

November 3 - Election Day. Go vote!

November 16 – Program: Food Waste in Milwaukee. Register for this online event at greatwatersgroup.org on the Calendar page.

December 6 – Holiday Party. Register for this online event at www.greatwatersgroup.org.

December 16 – Deadline to mail your Great Waters Group ExCom ballot or vote online.

January 11 – Program: Film Microplastics Madness. Look for details in the e-newsletter and website.

Nearby Nature seeks justice in environment

By David Thomas
Nearby Nature Chair

Nearby Nature is part of an environmental justice, equity and inclusion effort that the Great Waters Group started in 2017. The program is still going strong and is hoping to expand in 2021 as we (hopefully) emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Already, we have returned to holding safe outings. During October we co-sponsored two nature walks with small groups. These were not Sierra Club activities.

Especially cool was the hike along Lincoln Creek led by naturalist Sierra Taliaferro. She followed the hike with a beautiful essay describing the area as a “Pocket of Paradise.” You can read it here: <http://bit.ly/pocket-paradise>.

Our next big activity is a cleanup service outing on Saturday, Nov. 7, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We’ll meet, as usual, at the Bee Bus sign on 35th and Congress in Milwaukee. Please join us to learn more about this special Lincoln Creek natural area. Remember to wear a mask and keep six feet from others.

Our youth environmental education program is restarting with Lighthouse Youth Center in the Garden Homes neighborhood. We are partnering again with Urban Ecology Center and focusing on safe, outdoor activities.

Also, during October, we concluded a three-part workshop series titled “Building an Anti-Racist Environmental Movement” facilitated by August Ball of Cream City Conservation. More than 50 people completed all three sessions, representing more than 30 organizations, agencies and companies.

The workshop began with “Racial Equity 101,” which spanned 400 years of history, explaining how our culture created the system of racial disparity that we live with today. The series culminated with a session on “Disrupting White Dominant Culture to Build a Multi-Cultural Movement.” In this session, Ball led us through a process to better understand how cultural “norms” can play a role in suppressing minority voices in organizations.

One important take-away was that the work of ending racism can’t just be resolved with workshops and reading. It must be part of a continuing endeavor that includes self-reflection, lifelong learning and action on the ground.

Special thanks go to those who contributed to the 50th anniversary 50 for 50 fund raiser. The GWG has generously agreed to share the funds with Nearby Nature to reflect its commitment to racial equity.

Winter 2020



COVID-19 fatigue make you want to scream? It can't go on forever. GWG outings will resume as soon as they're safe.

Winter outings off

By Dan Buckler
Outings Chair

It's a tired story that I bring to you each newsletter, but due to the continuing pandemic, Sierra Club outings, including those by the Great Waters Group, are canceled through the winter.

While we are just as sad as you are that we are not able to host any outings, it is of course vitally important to reduce the chances of spreading COVID-19. We hope that you are still able to explore our beautiful nearby places. Please be on the lookout for hikes and cleanups hosted by other organizations in and around Milwaukee.

Remember, voting matters

(Continued from page 1)

Rowen's commentary at bit.ly/3ly6FQa outlines the striking Wisconsin COVID-19 statistics – and the high cost of short-sighted public policy.

Be sure to vote, and speak up for common sense, science and sound public policy to protect community health. Addressing COVID-19 is a public discussion fundamentally similar to the discussion we need to have to address climate change.

Make a plan to vote, and a plan to get your friends, family and neighbors to vote.

You can find the dates and places of your municipality's early voting, your polling place, the status of your mailed absentee ballot and more at myvote.wi.gov.

So be sure to get out and vote November 3 if you haven't already voted by then.

Ron Horn will be missed

By Ed Anderson
Membership Chair

Ron Horn, one of Great Waters Group's most beloved members, passed away at age 75 on Aug. 25.

A Sierra Club member for fifty years, Ron will be remembered for his positive, kindly spirit. During his trips to the Boundary Waters and to Utah as well as hikes and canoe trips in Wisconsin, he would help others by carrying the heaviest backpack. And who could forget his home-made ice cream and the grapes he grew to make wine?

I especially remember two winter trips I led to the cabins in Point Beach State Forest. On one trip, Ron drove all the way just to make us ice cream. On another cold, snowy night we all slept in the warmth of the cabin. But not Ron. He slept outside in the snow.

Some may recall how trips with Ron were made more adventurous by his VW camper, which often needed "adjustments" along the way. I am sure many of you have your own special Ron Horn stories.

Ron was recognized for his environmental stewardship and charitable contributions. He volunteered at Riveredge Nature Center, Ridges, Cedarburg Bog and the Ice Age Trail. He was also a past John Muir Chapter outings chair and Great Waters Group's first vice chair. We will miss you on the trails, old friend.



GWG endorses Palzewicz for Congress

The Sierra Club Great Waters Group is endorsing Tom Palzewicz for Congress in Wisconsin's 5th District because he knows going green doesn't mean spending more green. It is the fiscally responsible thing to do.

Palzewicz is seeking to replace Jim Sensenbrenner's 40 years of environmental inaction with sound policy in his race against State Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald. He knows that it's essential that we develop innovative green energy solutions, create more jobs in the renewable energy sector and end our dependence on fossil fuels. For more information, go to www.tomforwi.com.

The Sierra Club also has endorsed U.S. Rep Gwen Moore. For the state Legislature, The GWG is focused on supporting these candidates in key races:

- Sara Rodriguez (13 Assembly District)
- Deb Andraca (23rd Assembly District)
- Emily Siegrist (24th Assembly District)
- Jacob Malinowski (82nd Assembly District)

Help the Sierra Club send environmentalists to Congress. For the full list of Sierra Club legislative endorsements, go to www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/sierra-club-announces-2020-endorsements.

Winter Programs

GWG has some great monthly programs coming up that we would love to hold in person but for now we will continue with virtual events to protect everyone's health.

*-Jenny Abel
Programs Chair*

Food Waste in Milwaukee

Monday, Nov. 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom (connection information will be sent after registration).

Register: at greatwatersgroup.org on the Calendar page.

Leaders from four local organizations that are at the forefront of improving food security in Milwaukee – Friedens Community Ministries Food Pantry, Kompost Kids, Tikkun Ha-Ir and Tricklebee Café – will talk about the extent of the food waste problem in Milwaukee and the work they are doing to bring

healthy food to Milwaukee-area residents. Join us on Zoom and learn about the great work of these local food security pioneers and about steps that you can take in your own life to combat food waste. This event is rescheduled from the in-person one originally planned for March that had to be canceled at the last minute.

Film: Microplastics Madness

Jan. 11, 6:30-8:30

This documentary chronicles an elementary school in Brooklyn, N.Y., where the students took action to reduce their environmental impact. They have inspired other schools and groups around the country. After the film we'll hold a Q&A and will be joined by someone connected with the school who can fill us in on the students' work. Look for details later on our website, future e-letters and Facebook.



Garage sales at Chair RoseMary Oliveira's house in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood were key fund raisers for the Great Waters Group in the nineties. She talked about them at the Anniversary Zoom.



Bill Moore, well known for his scrumptious bannock bread, was the man who began the Quetico Canoe trips that have become a popular attraction for GWG's members during its 50-year history.

Anniversary kicks off 50 for 50 drive

More than 30 people from various decades participated as the Great Waters Group celebrated 50 years of fighting for the environment during a successful Zoom event Sept. 10.

Special thanks go to the leaders from the early days, including Bob Diggelman, Bill Schultheis, Dave Wehnes and Bill Beverly as well as more recent Group chairs.

We heard about canoe outings on the Wisconsin River, club members' early recycling pickups in Riverwest, Earth Day

events and more. And we learned that we've made progress – we don't see toilet paper floating in the Milwaukee River. But some things haven't changed. We're still fighting highway expansions and advocating for clean water and air.

The event also raised \$799 toward our goal of \$2,500 from our new 50 for 50 campaign. If you donated, thank you. If you haven't, you can still do so at www.teamsierra.org/wisconsin/gwg50 or at the Virtual Holiday Party.

Railway industry group targets journalist

Journalist Justin Mikulka, known for his in-depth reporting on oil trains and related hazards, was mentioned on the front page of the last Great Waters Group newsletter. On Sept. 13, *The Intercept* online publication reported that a railroad industry group, the Association of American Railroads, claimed that his writing could inspire "criminal activity."

While not accusing him of being a criminal himself, the association claimed that Mikulka's writing about the dangers of shipping oil by rail could inspire "criminal activity" in the form

of protests that disrupt rail activity. See more at bit.ly/3lBgNYp

"I knew that the industry was aware of my work and didn't like it, but the idea that they were privately lumping me in with terrorists to law enforcement is frightening and shocking," Mikulka said in *The Intercept*. "To whom were these documents presented? Am I now on security lists, being ranked as a threat to the rail industry? It seems like they couldn't challenge what I'm saying on a factual basis so they resorted to attacking me like this."



Former Sierra Club President Aaron Mair joined GWG leaders in presenting the Environmental Hero of the Year Award to Huda Al-kaff of the Wisconsin Green Muslims at the 2016 Holiday Party.

Party goes virtual, but fun goes on

(Continued from page 1) focuses on environmental justice and equity in Milwaukee. You can donate online at www.teamsierra.org/wisconsin/gwg50 now or during the party. Or you can mail a check to Great Waters Group of the Sierra Club, PO Box 26798, Wauwatosa WI 53226. (Note that donations are not tax deduct-

ible.) We thank you in advance for your support.

There is no charge to attend, so please consider contributing to our 50 for 50 campaign and supporting Aladdin as well as the local businesses and nonprofits that have generously donated to our silent auctions in the past and may be struggling this year.

Support GWG donors

In previous years, these generous businesses and groups have donated silent auction items to support the Great Waters Group. With many businesses struggling amid the pandemic this year, we encourage our members to support these places instead.

Register at www.greatwatersgroup.org to get the Zoom link to attend. Look for further details about the fun activities in our e-letter, website and Facebook page. If you have any questions or would like to help, email Jane Schneider at janes0502@gmail.com.

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| Bublr Bikes | Rainbow Children's Bookseller |
| Clock Shadow Creamery | Ray's Growler Gallery |
| Cold Spoons Gelato | Rishi Tea |
| Colectivo Coffee | Riveredge Nature Center |
| ComedySportz | Samara Garden & Home |
| Eddee Daniel & Landmarks Gallery | Schlitz Audubon Nature Center |
| Emery's Cycling, Triathlon and Fitness | Sharon Lynne Wilson Center |
| Florentine Opera Company | Sherper's |
| Harley-Davidson Museum | Square One Art Glass |
| Highlands Cafe | Stella's Salon & Spa |
| Janus Massage and Yoga Studio | Sunnyslope Gardens |
| Little Read Book Store | Sunset Playhouse |
| Milwaukee Repertory Theater | The Little Read Book |
| Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra | The Spice House |
| Museum of Wisconsin Art | Trader Joe's |
| Oro di Oliva | Urban Ecology Center |
| Outpost Natural Foods | Usinger's Famous Sausage |
| Purple Door Ice Cream | Vintage Glass Garden |

Volunteer Leadership Council (VLC) Contact List

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 Jennifer Abel, Vice-Chair and Program Chair jabel20@gmail.com
 Angelina Burkholder, Secretary angelinaburkholder@gmail.com
 Jane Schneider, Treasurer janes0502@gmail.com
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 Veronica Bell, Outings Co-Chair mabellmela@gmail.com
 Eric Hansen, Conservation Chair ehansen@wi.rr.com
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 Chris Zapf, Volunteer Chair and Hospitality Chair zapfchristine@sbcglobal.net
 Ed Anderson, Membership Chair maidenlakewisconsin@yahoo.com
 Janet Anderson, Communication Team janeta16@sbcglobal.net
 Bill Baurecht, Emeritus wbaurecht@gmail.com
 Dan Buckler, Outings Co-Chair, Communication Team daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com
 Karen Samelson, Publicity Chair, Communication Team ksamelson16@gmail.com
 David Thomas, Nearby Nature Chair, Communication Team david@thomerwald.net
 Dale Hofmann, Newsletter Editor dhofmann@yaho.com

Six nominated for positions on committee

In addition to voting in the November national election, it's time to vote for the next group of people who will be joining the Great Waters Group Executive Committee. They will help shape the work of the Group over the next two years. We have six open spots and six candidates, so when you vote please be sure to vote to fill all six slots.

This year you have the option of filling out and mailing back the paper ballot included with this newsletter or you can vote electronically by following this link: <https://forms.gle/W1WKV85o8A-F8uBQv5>. You'll need to have your member number handy. You can find that by going to <https://myaccount.sierra-club.org>. Before voting, please read through the statements from our candidates. **The deadline to return your ballot is Dec. 16.**

Bill Baurecht

Bill has led national lodge, service, base camp, family, and grandparents/grandkids outings. A certified national outings leader, he and his wife, Helen,



Bill Baurecht



Veronica Bell



Dan Buckler



Crystal Hoecherl

Official Ballot: 2020: GWG Executive Committee Election

Mark an X on the line next to your selections. Each member may vote for up to 6 candidates (The second member in a household may cast votes as Voter #2.)

Voter #1	Voter #2
<input type="checkbox"/> Bill Baurecht	<input type="checkbox"/> Bill Baurecht
<input type="checkbox"/> Veronica Bell	<input type="checkbox"/> Veronica Bell
<input type="checkbox"/> Dan Buckler	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan Buckler
<input type="checkbox"/> Linda Frank	<input type="checkbox"/> Linda Frank
<input type="checkbox"/> Crystal Hoecherl	<input type="checkbox"/> Crystal Hoecherl
<input type="checkbox"/> Kali Hoefert	<input type="checkbox"/> Kali Hoefert

Mail completed ballot to:
S.C. Great Waters Group Election Committee
PO Box 26798, Wauwatosa, WI 53226, postmarked by Dec. 16
Member number _____

have co-lead numerous national hiking and service outings. They were named Outstanding Leadership Team recipients for leading 2019 trips in two of the eight national outings regions. He is a retired English professor, academic administrator and former GWG program chair.



Kali Hoefert

Veronica Bell

Veronica loves hiking, camping and enjoying the outdoors in the beautiful state of Wisconsin. She joined the GWG Executive Committee and wants to continue to serve as an ExCom member to help others have the opportunity to participate in local and regional Sierra Club outings as well. Veronica wants to help ensure that everyone has the chance to enjoy the benefits of getting out in nature.



Linda Frank

Dan Buckler

Dan just celebrated his 15-year Sierra Club anniversary and has been leading interpretive, recreational and stewardship outings for the Great Waters Group since 2014. Since early 2019, he has dedicated time toward a partnership with Havenwoods State Forest on the north side of Milwaukee where he

(Continued on page 8)



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Six nominated for Executive Committee

(Continued from page 3)

leads monthly workdays. He is a previous Executive Committee member and is on the board of Nearby Nature and other environmental and service organizations.

Crystal Hoecherl

Crystal has preferred the outdoors since childhood and even climbed trees to read. She says she still sleeps better in her tent than anywhere else, even when it's cold. After learning firsthand how pollution devastates health, she has become even more interested in protecting the environment. She enjoys Sierra Club outings and has served as the Great Waters Group secretary, vice chair and chair.

Kali Hoefert

Kali has lived in Milwaukee her entire life, but she's no stranger to outdoor spaces. She grew up exploring and utilizing the park systems and green spaces all around her. She graduated from Milwaukee High School of the Arts in 2017 as a visual arts major and started work at Hawthorn Glen Outdoor Education Center shortly before graduation as a part

of its land steward crew. She is a natural resources educator for the Wisconsin DNR.

Linda Frank

With Linda on board, the ExCom will have the inside scoop on what's happening with the Milwaukee City/County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity. The GWG will have an opportunity to weigh in on the process and help her to represent the Sierra Club in her role on the task force. She can also provide updates on the work of the Milwaukee Equity & Climate Alliance (MECA). The values of the Sierra Club and GWG are also aligned with her work as president of the Milwaukee Area Land Conservancy, which ensures the preservation and restoration of precious natural landscapes acquired through fee title or conservation easement.



Thank you to everyone who contributed through workplace giving to the Sierra Club Foundation and Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee.