

GEORGIA SIERRAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GEORGIA SIERRA CLUB ♦ JUL / AUG / SEP 2017



THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY ISSUE ♦ HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY ON A BUDGET
CAN GOVERNMENT BE ENERGY EFFICIENT? ♦ SOLARIZING OUR SCHOOLS
PLUS ♦ CHAPTER GATHERING PREVIEW ♦ TRAILBLAZING AT PANTHER CREEK

FROM THE CHAPTER DIRECTOR

While President Trump may want to undo our nation's progress towards protecting our health and our climate, the Sierra Club is committed to moving us forward here in Georgia.

Combating the threat of climate change is not only a moral responsibility but also the opportunity of a lifetime to repower our state and empower our communities with clean, renewable energy. That's why the Sierra Club is proud to support the goal of powering our state with 100 percent clean energy.

Doctors, nurses, and scientists agree that pollution from fossil fuels is dangerous and that we must take action to protect public health. That means moving away from dirty fuel towards cleaner, more affordable sources of energy like wind and solar. With as much sun, land, and wind as Georgia has, we could create hundreds of thousands of decades-long jobs while we aspire to power our state.

At the Sierra Club, we know that these climate solutions are readily available and promise a brighter future for our community. Just as computers and the Internet transformed our economy, our transition to clean and renewable energy will spur innovation, launch new businesses, create good-paying jobs, and drive economic growth that benefits the whole state. The transition to 100 percent clean and renewable energy builds on the spirit and values that have long defined our state: liberty, opportunity, and innovation.

We're not alone in this pursuit. More than 80 companies have pledged to source 100 percent of their energy from renewables, including Apple, General Motors, Walmart, and Johnson & Johnson. More than 25 cities from major metropolises like San Diego and Salt Lake



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David Emory, Alex Lynch, Brionte McCorkle, Diondra Powers

Postmaster

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Welcome to Your NEW Georgia Sierran!

You may have noticed a new, streamlined look for this issue of the *Sierran*. (Special thanks to our friends at the S.F. Bay Chapter for sharing their design template.) Along with our recent move to full-color printing, we hope that this change brings a new level of clarity to the exciting work being done by the Chapter, our Groups, and our volunteers around the state. We always welcome your ideas and feedback – drop us a line at gasierran@gmail.com!

- THE EDITORS

SUMMER 2017 SIERRA CLUB NEWS

Brenda Cargin Joins Georgia Chapter Staff



The Georgia Chapter is pleased to welcome Brenda Cargin as our new Communications Assistant. Brenda is a Georgia native, born and raised in Gwinnett County. She graduated from the University of Georgia in 2015 with degrees in Latin American & Caribbean Studies and Spanish

and is currently working towards a Master of Arts in Mass Communication at Georgia State University.

As Communications Assistant, Brenda will be focusing on telling the Chapter's stories, growing our support

across the state, and sharing all of the exciting opportunities to get involved with the Sierra Club with new volunteers. She enjoys spending time outside (especially with her dog), and says "I can't wait for all of the opportunities I'll have to do so here at the Sierra Club."

Stephen Stetson Joins Beyond Coal Team

Stephen Stetson has joined the Sierra Club's national Beyond Coal team as a senior campaign representative, focusing on Southern Company organizing. Stephen will be based in his native Alabama, but his work will also cover Georgia and Mississippi, and he will work closely with Georgia office staff.



Stephen graduated from the University of Alabama School of Law, received his undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of Texas, and serves on a number of nonprofit boards of directors, including the Alabama Rivers Alliance. He lives in Montgomery with his wife, Kate, their dog, Toffler, and their cat, Snowden.

From the Chapter Director (Continued)

City to small towns like Abita Springs, Louisiana and Greensburg, Kansas have committed to 100 percent renewable energy. Even within Georgia, Atlanta committed to 100 percent clean energy within the next two decades. We want the rest of our state to join this growing movement, and we're committed to working with leaders across our state to realize this vision.

From coast to coast, clean energy is already providing immense benefits to families and businesses. Investments in clean energy have increased dramatically in recent years, and clean energy is among the fastest-growing sectors of our economy. This means more investment in job creation in our communities and more resources for our state. Across the country, jobs in the solar energy sector have been growing at 12 times the national economy. In Georgia specifically, we could create nearly 220,000 jobs for 40 years with a combination of solar, wind, and energy efficiency efforts.

This transition will not happen overnight. It will take our state coming together to make it happen. But we know that 100 percent clean energy isn't just the right thing to do for our families, it's the smart thing to do for jobs and our economy.

It's about realizing a vision for our state where families can raise their kids in communities free from toxic pollution, where everyone has the opportunity for a good job, and where all people are thriving through access to healthy, affordable energy like wind and solar.

The Sierra Club is proud to stand with the more than 120+ mayors across the country who have endorsed this vision in their cities. We're ready to get to work to make 100 percent clean energy happen in cities throughout Georgia and we hope you'll stand with us.

Ted Terry
CHAPTER DIRECTOR

Energy Efficiency Is an Energy Resource

ELEANOR HAND

According to the American Council on Energy Efficiency (ACEE), in the electricity sector energy efficiency is the third largest resource after natural gas and coal. Across the broader sector, studies show that energy efficiency is the nation's largest resource!

How can *not* using energy be a resource? Utilities can generate more energy to meet demand or reduce demand. If utilities encourage their customers to reduce their energy waste or customers voluntarily reduce their own energy waste, this will displace the need to generate energy from nuclear, coal, natural gas, wind and solar. This is usually achieved at one-third the cost of new generation of energy, and you don't need to install and upgrade transmission lines for the energy efficiency resource! Efficiency can improve reliability of a utility's system and perhaps decrease the need to add new peak generation. And using energy efficiency as a resource reduces air pollution and greenhouse gases.

How do the Georgia utilities fare in using energy efficiency as a resource? The ACEE 2017 Utility Energy Efficiency Scorecard evaluated the 51 largest electric utilities on utility sector energy efficiency programs and policies in 2015. Georgia Power ranked seventh from the bottom. Supporting and encouraging an improvement in Georgia Power's energy efficiency programs and the policies in the state that encourage these programs is a tangible goal for our energy efficiency campaign.

The articles on energy efficiency in this issue of the *Sierran* describe ways that individuals—both property owners and renters—can take their own action to become more energy efficient. The Georgia Sierra Club will begin a campaign as part of our strategic plan to reduce the demand for new energy generation. The Club will advocate for public policies that encourage and require actions that reduce the consumer demand for energy. We will be developing a campaign to meet these goals over the next few months, and we welcome your ideas and involvement.

State Government Can Do Energy Efficiency

MARK WOODALL

While individuals are urged to do what they can at home to maximize energy efficiency, state and local governments can also make a big contribution. A 2010 Georgia law, S.B. 194, allows for energy savings performance-based contracting and helps state agencies finance capital improvements to save energy and water.

Implementation and oversight of S.B. 194 falls to the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA). At a recent hearing on the effectiveness of the law, GEFA Executive Director Kevin Clark said that after S.B. 194 was approved, GEFA developed a state manual for project implementation, with a target of 20 percent savings, and currently has 11 pre-qualified contractors. The agency also reviews agency applications and approves final contracts.

To date, a total of \$82 million in contracts has been awarded. Projects have been undertaken by the Department of Corrections, University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, North Georgia Mountain Authority, Georgia Department of Transportation, and the Georgia World Congress Center.

Alan Travis of the Board of Regents facilities office said that while the Regents worked with Georgia Tech and UGA, it was the institutions that took the lead. The projects included a \$1.5 million contract at Tech for chiller plants and \$400,000 for work on eight buildings at UGA. The institutions are looking at a \$7.5 million positive cash flow over 10 years.

The Georgia DOT chose 10 facilities around Atlanta for its first project, a \$6.2 million contract to replace 4,000 lighting fixtures and HVAC chillers. GDOT expects annual savings of over \$500,000 from the initial project, and has hired a consultant to look at all of GDOT's buildings.

The Georgia World Congress Center is also pursuing a project under the law, with lighting as the primary focus. The GWCC is already the largest LEED-certified facility in Georgia, currently at the "silver" level but will a goal of "gold" certification. The \$28 million project is replacing 50,000 lights with LEDs as well as upgrading the main chiller plant. The GWCC hopes to cut utility bills, currently \$6.9 million a year, to \$5 million.

Cliff Valley School Solarizing, Educating Students About the Benefits of Solar Power

MATTHEW SNOPE

The powers that be—in other words, Georgia Power and certain local Republican politicians—once dismissed Georgia as too cloudy for solar power. But hot, glarey days of summer and plenty of sun year-round actually make Georgia an ideal place for alternative energies, and one forward-thinking local school is “going solar.” Non-profit, independent, K-8 Cliff Valley School, which started incorporating environmental education in 2004, has made the investment in solar by partnering with Hannah Solar and Southface, and expects to have the school solar-powered when it begins the new school year in August.

“Solar fits nicely with the philosophy of the school,” School Director Michael Edwards reports. “It’s attractive to parents, and complements nicely our seed-to-table education about where food comes from, the rainwater harvesting we do, and our composting program. Some 7th-graders studying electricity became excited about solarizing CVS, so we are putting solar panels on the roof of the gym, and everyone is excited about it,” he says.

Is there a downside to solarizing? “It’s a considerable investment upfront, but the eventual payoff and self-sufficiency is very nice,” Edwards says.



The school has been progressive-minded since its inception in 1966, and sees solarization as part of an overall approach that stresses environmental education, traditional learning, meeting standards-based testing requirements, in addition to graduating kind, intelligent learners.

“Our kids go on overnight trips to experience different ecosystems (such as Jekyll Island),” Edwards explains. “It’s important for people in a city like Atlanta to stay connected to nature and utilize sustainable energy, and for our youth to see that in action,” he says.

Georgians are coming around to the win-win benefits of solar: homes and businesses can become energy self-sufficient, and solarization can provide skilled, living wage jobs that provide an ethical, valuable service to the community while moving Georgia away from fossil fuels.

Kudos to CVS for letting the youth lead the way, and to the students for pushing progress. It is, after all, a world with significant challenges ahead of it that they are inheriting. Fortunately, at least as far as energy demand, as the old bumper sticker saying goes: a solution rises every morning.



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Taking Climate Action Right In Our Own Home

NORMAN SLAWSKY

We thought that we needed to spend a small fortune to replace our windows to make our historic Druid Hills home energy-efficient. We were also looking for more comfort and less temperature variation.

Retrofit America, one of the leading contractors with the Georgia Power Home Energy Improvement program, thought otherwise. So we brought them into our home to do an energy audit.

We learned that insulation and air sealing are the keys to a home's energy efficiency. The attic crawlspace areas along the perimeter of our second floor were poorly insulated with fiberglass batts. Our basement crawl space had no insulation at all.

Our contractor ran a blower door test to measure air leakage, and found that our home was leaking air like a sieve—but not from the windows! Most of the air leakage was from the attic spaces and basement. The main floor ductwork was leaking. The doors needed weather stripping. In terms of air leakage, the windows were fine because of storm windows.

An analysis was conducted on our utility bills to gain an objective estimate of how efficiently we heat and cool our home. On a one-to-ten scale, where one is a perfectly efficient home, our Home Efficiency Score was an 8.5—there was a lot of room for improvement!

So we put Retrofit America to work. They sprayed the under side of the roof deck and gable walls in our attic crawlspaces with open-cell foam insulation. They encapsulated our basement crawl space, sealing the earthen floor area with a 10 mil liner and spraying the foundation walls and rim joist with closed-cell foam insulation. They sealed our ductwork with mastic paste, and they weather stripped our exterior doors.

We also replaced our 17-year-old HVAC system for the main floor with a variable 95 percent efficient natural gas furnace and a 21.5 SEER AC unit.

What's the result? Our home improved its energy-efficiency by 32 percent—meaning that before our home retrofit, we were using about one third of our energy to heat and cool the outdoors! We were able to change our

thermostat settings to be more conservative in our energy use after the retrofit because we were more comfortable.

That's typical of what home retrofits have been achieving: Retrofit America has been saving Atlanta homeowners an average of 40 percent on their heating and cooling. In reality, that's the average of a range of homes where savings typically varies from 30 percent to 55 percent (32 percent in my case) and there is, of course, relatively wide variation in the cost of the retrofit and the payback period as well. The average retrofit costs about \$7,500 and the typical payback is 6 to 10 years. Our retrofit cost a bit more than that with the replacement of the outdated and inefficient HVAC system.

Homeowners will recover part of their investment when they sell their homes, and they have the advantage of being able to market their homes as energy-efficient.

Scale this process across America's 81 million single-family homes, and the potential impact is huge: Heating, cooling and powering homes is 22 percent of U.S. energy consumption and 20 percent of our CO₂ emissions.

It's good to save some money on our utilities. It's even better to feel more comfortable in our home. And it's really great to be taking action on climate change, right in our own home!



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An Energy-Efficient Home Without Breaking the Bank

MICHELLE KAISER

“Globally, energy efficiency represents 40 percent of the greenhouse gas reduction potential” according to McKinsey and Company’s report *Energy Efficiency: A Compelling Global Resource*. U.S. electricity use has been dropping slowly over the last eight years, as efficient products have lowered our power use even in the face of bigger houses and more electronics. However, we may see an even brighter efficiency future. The dynamic CEO of Vermont’s Green Mountain Power, Mary Powell, predicts that in five to ten years we will see electricity use plunge.

This is my story, trying to maximize the efficiency of my own apartment, tools I found helpful, unexpected lessons and one invention. Late in 2016, I decided to see how energy efficient I could make my 960 sq. ft., shady apartment without breaking the bank. I began my journey with a monthly electricity bill of \$90-120, or approximately 15 kWh (kilowatt hours) per day, and have now settled into a nice monthly bill of \$32-44, or 6 kWh per day. I was focused on the cheapest solutions, and only on items I’d be willing to put into an apartment.

My first change was to improve our habits with the AC and heater. If we were out of the apartment, the temperature was set to something cheaper. It takes getting used to, but showed immediate cost improvements. If I were in a house, I’d consider a smart thermostat, but at \$100-\$200, changing habits was a better call. I’ve since learned that if you don’t need an internet enabled thermostat, a programmable one can be bought from Home Depot for \$22.

I also decided to learn about AC units and heaters in general. Most people know they can save energy by replacing their filters regularly, but I also found that you should check your insulation on the AC lines. Mine was uninsulated, and the insulation to fix the line cost a mere \$2. I bought that black pop-on insulation at Home Depot, and it was incredibly easy to install.

One idea that kept coming up was how heating or cooling a whole house is unnecessary if all you want is to be personally comfortable. My husband and I prefer vastly different temperatures at night, so I splurged on an electric blanket for \$60. Then, I realized that maybe he could have a cooler blanket to help offset warmer nights. An Egyptian cotton blanket did the trick at \$20. Who knew energy efficiency could stop an argument we’ve had for years?

I also replaced our light bulbs with LEDs. Now, it’s a little hard to know what my exact cost savings were, but I spent about \$7 for every four bulbs, replacing approximately 16 bulbs and saw a big drop in the bill for that month. So, for a little more than \$20, I think I got my money back in two to three months. I think everyone should just do a fast-as-you-can changeover for the best financial return and energy savings.

Further reading about home energy use caused me to learn about something called vampire load. Essentially, all your electronics that tell the time or can be turned on using a remote are never completely off. This means that they are all quietly using electricity 24/7; for older electronics, this can be quite a lot of power. So, I put all of my electronics on power strips with off buttons, and I turn everything off for the 23 ½ hours a day that I’m not needing that machine. There are even power strips that will turn themselves back on if you use any remote on them.

Since learning about my air conditioner was simple, I turned to my other appliances. I set my refrigerator to the recommended settings, checked that it had clean vents, and that all the sides had room for air flow. I turned off my dishwasher’s heated dry option. Then, I switched to hanging my shirts to dry, which should save on their lifespan as well as energy. Plus, I learned how long my pants and towels really take to dry, and I don’t run the dryer any extra. This is important because, on average, the dryer is 4 percent of a household electricity bill.

Finally, I decided that I really should explore the insulating options for an apartment. The best tool I found was a \$12 infrared gun that reads the temperature of any surface. I had a great time spotting leaks and learning where my hot or cold air was going. The front door needed new weather stripping, and I learned that two of my closets had uninsulated exterior walls. But the biggest surprise was how much air was escaping from locations I didn’t suspect. The entry space for the pipes to the water heater needed work, and the fireplace was a huge drain. Now, you can buy a flue balloon for \$60 that can prevent fireplace losses, but I chose to design my own solution. I basically took thick fabric, cut it to cover the front of the fireplace, and sewed a line of magnets into the top. It cost \$5, a little time, and works like a charm.

Altogether, I probably spent a few hours on these projects, just a bit over \$100, and I am saving approximately \$70 per month. For me, this project was well worth the return. I hope all of you will join me in trying to usher in the energy efficiency revolution.

Forest Action Team Begins Panther Creek Trail Days

JESSICA MOREHEAD

PHOTOS BY CHRIS MASTIN



This year, the Wildlands & Wildlife Committee created a Forest Action Team to help advance its efforts to advocate for responsible management and protection of our National Forests. One thing we learned was how much the United States Forest Service (USFS) depends on volunteers to help supplement their limited capacity, especially when it comes to trail maintenance. This spring, the team decided to embark upon a long-term volunteer project with the USFS to help restore and maintain the Panther Creek Trail.

Located in the Chattooga River District of the Chatahoochee National Forest, the trail follows the creek before emptying out into the Tugaloo River, part of the Savannah River Basin. This gorgeous in-and-out waterfall hike hugs the creek and leads you along a series of falls before reaching Panther Creek Falls. Once you arrive at the main falls, you find yourself on a partially shaded beach with lots of opportunities for cooling off, taking a dip and relaxing by the water. It really is the perfect summertime hike!

Unfortunately, this picturesque trail has been loved to death. High use, lack of maintenance and some original design flaws have created issues over the years. There are currently several areas with erosion problems that not only

need to be fixed for users to safely enjoy the trail, but also need to be addressed to stop sediment pollution from entering the creek and the surrounding watershed.



IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

Over the next couple of years, our work will make a huge impact on water quality and user experience. Our goal is to restore the tread to a more sustainable design, make sure this beloved trail is safe and clean for all users, and to stop erosion-driven impacts to water quality.

Every first Saturday of the month the Forest Team leads a Trail Day through our local outings program. We clean up trash from the trail and campsites, clear overgrown brush, and carry out treadwork and rockwork to help re-shape and develop a more sustainable trail.

WANT TO JOIN US?

Check out our calendar (sierraclub.org/georgia/calendar) to sign up. For information and other questions, contact Jessica Morehead at jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org.

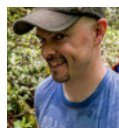
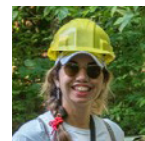


"Almost every hiker that passes by the team says, 'Thank You'. Trails are a part of how they experience and hopefully enjoy the outdoors, making the work important for them."

- MATT BROHAMMER

"Definitely rewarding experience but truly excruciating...lots to learn...team work the best...rain and all, would do it again!"

- MARTA MERRIMAN



"Even though you are working, you still get to hike and enjoy the mountains with great people and feel a sense of accomplishment on top of everything."

- WALKER MCKNIGHT

SUMMER 2017 GROUP NEWS

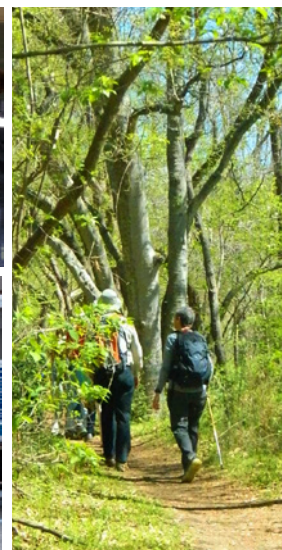
CENTENNIAL GROUP

Centennial Group Stays Busy, Plans 25th Anniversary Event

LYNN WALSTON

Though we're taking a bit of a hiatus from our regular monthly meetings in July and August, the Centennial Group stayed very busy this spring and summer with conservation, political, and outreach activities, and we are looking ahead to our fall season and our 25th Anniversary celebration in September! Our recent activities included: the 6th District run-off campaign for Jon Ossoff; demonstration against the EPA defunding proposal; testimony at a Public Service Commission hearing on halting new Plant Vogtle construction; presentation at the Atlanta Tree Preservation Commission re. clear-cutting threats to Peachtree Hills Park; collecting and delivering signed petitions to the Governor's Office in support of a CSX Rails-to-Trails proposal for the Silver Comet; and initiating a new survey to gauge interest by Cobb-area residents for pursuing expanded and alternative transit options (see www.transit4cobb.org.) Other summer highlights include:

- ♦ We held another another successful Adopt-A-Mile Cleanup of "The Rushway" on May 27th (our adopted stretch of Lower Roswell Road in East Cobb, named in honor of our late member and friend, Rush Netterville). Led by Angie Netterville.
- ♦ We enjoyed an excellent presentation at our June 1st group meeting from Dr. Berneta Haynes, Director of Equity and Access at Georgia Watch.
- ♦ We co-sponsored a "Family Fun Day Celebration" on June 3rd with the City of Austell's Community Garden Program.
- ♦ We participated for the 3rd year in the Cobb NAACP "Juneteenth Celebration" on the square in Marietta.



- ♦ We continued our presence and pressure at Cobb Commission meetings in support of parks and greenspace funding.
- ♦ We sponsored several outings each month and helped new outing leaders to complete their certification.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Our next group meeting is Thursday, September 7th at 7 p.m. at Life University with guest Henry Slack, a distinguished lecturer and leader of the Atlanta Chapter of the Citizen's Climate Lobby (CCL). He will speak about CCL and how a 'carbon dividend' can build the economy while reducing greenhouse gases (by 50% in 20 years).

Please mark your calendars for Saturday, September 23rd at 11 a.m. for our special Centennial Group 25th Anniversary Celebration and Picnic at the Paces Mill Unit of the CNRA. For more information, see <http://sierraclub.org/georgia/centennial> or contact Lynn Walston (lynnwalston22@yahoo.com).

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GROUP INFO & CONTACTS

Lynn Walston ♦ lynnwalston22@yahoo.com ♦ *Chair*
Lee Graham ♦ leegrah3@gmail.com ♦ *Outings Chair*

Monthly Meetings: 1st Thursday, welcome/refreshments at 7 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m.; Life College, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta. For directions please contact Lynn Walston.

Visit our Webpage at <http://sierraclub.org/georgia/centennial>

Join us on Facebook at
<http://facebook.com/Centennial.Sierra.Club>

Atlanta Charges Ahead with Transition to 100% Clean Energy

NINA DUTTON

We had high attendance at our June meeting, with regulars and first-timers alike ready to learn about and discuss an important topic: Atlanta's place in the global transition to 100 percent renewable energy that we need for the climate. Thanks to Ted Terry, Sierra Club Georgia Chapter director, for his presentation and for leading the discussion! There was no monthly meeting for our group in July.

TAKE ACTION ON #READYFOR100

The Atlanta City Council voted unanimously on May 1st to set a goal for Atlanta to run on 100 percent renewable energy by 2035! We suggest writing a quick note to Atlanta City Council members to say thank you for taking this necessary and important step. Then, write to mayoral and city council candidates (all, or just your preferred ones) to ask if they are committed to this goal, what they will do to help the city achieve it, and how they plan to leverage the transition to benefit Atlanta's residents.

Don't live in the city of Atlanta? You can contact your county or municipal officials to find out what plans there are in your area for the transition to 100 percent renewable energy. Also, we can all contact our elected Public Service Commissioners to urge them to regulate Georgia Power and other utilities such that they can work together with local governments toward these necessary, urgent renewable energy and energy efficiency goals (and not stand in the way).

ADOPT-A-STREAM PROGRAM

Our Adopt-a-Stream activities involve Peachtree Creek in Medlock Park. For biological monitoring, we need many eyes to find the macroinvertebrate critters found in the



creek. The next chance to get your feet wet—figuratively or literally!—on a day with both biological and chemical monitoring is September 16, from 10 a.m. to noon. Chemical monitoring will be from 10 to 11 a.m., and biological monitoring will take the full time. For information about chemical monitoring dates, call Larry Kloet at (404) 636-7226. For more details about biological monitoring, call Nancy Wylie at (404)256-1172. Detailed directions are available at <http://sierraclub.org/georgia/atlanta/adopt-stream-program>.

GET INVOLVED

2017 is a big year for elections in Atlanta, with crowded fields of candidates running for mayor and city council. We need volunteers now for our group's political committee, which reaches out to candidates for information and decides on which ones to endorse! It's not a huge time commitment, but you may learn a lot and help others make sense of elections. Email political chair Eddie Ehlert at edehkert@bellsouth.net to find out more.

Want to pitch in by keeping on top of local news, policy, politics, events and opportunities? Would you like to lead outings, or perhaps help plan the Georgia Chapter retreat or other events? Please email our chair, Nina Dutton, at nddutton@gmail.com.

GROUP INFO & CONTACTS

Nina Dutton ♦ nddutton@gmail.com ♦ *Co-Chair*
Denise LaSonde ♦ deniselasonde@gmail.com ♦ *Co-Chair*
Martin McConaughy ♦ mcmarty@bellsouth.net ♦ *Outings Chair*

Our Executive Committee Meetings are open and generally held on the first Tuesday of the month (Athens Pizza, 7:30 p.m.). Contact Nina Dutton (nddutton@gmail.com) for details.

Monthly Meetings: The Metro Atlanta Group typically meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Typically our meetings feature a speaker on a timely topic. Then, we present info on how to take action on important issues. Recently we have been meeting at the Georgia Chapter office, at 743 E. College Ave. Suite B, Decatur, GA, 30030, but the location is subject to change. Please join us at 7 p.m. to socialize and 7:30 p.m. for the program! -

Sign Up for Email Updates through the Georgia Chapter website (<http://sierraclub.org/georgia>) and be sure to include your Atlanta-area zipcode.

Visit our Webpage at <http://sierraclub.org/georgia/atlanta>

Join us on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/sierraclubatl>

Opportunities Abound in LaGrange

LAURA BREYFOGLE

Given the current political climate in our country, all of us Sierrans and our fellow environmentalists are really having to ramp up our efforts to prevent slipping backwards in terms of land, water and air protection. Though our tasks may seem daunting, we must remain active and hopeful!

The LaGrange group has been working on the following few items this summer:

- ♦ After finding out about a proposed ATV park on the Chattahoochee River near Bush Head Shoals in Heard County, we alerted chapter leaders who sent a letter of opposition. Being downstream of this area, we also sent our own letter. Fortunately, many voices of opposition—Heard County Commissioners, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper and nearby property owners—attended hearings and spoke out. Fortunately, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) dropped this proposal!

- ♦ Vicky Hoover from the National Sierra Club office emailed Sierra Club chapter leaders around the country asking for folks to call their U.S. congressmen (and women) to co-sponsor a bill to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which has made possible many parks, bike paths, recreation complexes and swimming facilities. She helped us pinpoint key representatives and contacts, as well as identified past projects in our district. Several members of our leadership committee made phone calls.

- ♦ Some of you may be aware that the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) is required to make public their plans for disposing of the solid coal ash sludge and the water from temporary coal ash ponds which are now being closed. Through an EPD email, we found out that a landfill in neighboring Meriwether County is currently accepting coal ash. Mary Lou Dabbs, one of our group leaders, has contacted a LaGrange College professor to ask if he would be willing to test water samples above and below the landfill for heavy metals commonly found in coal ash. We are hoping to work with Chattahoochee Riverkeeper on this effort.

- ♦ Travis Towns, another valuable member of our leadership team, is attending activist trainings offered at the Georgia Chapter office. Hopefully, he will share tools he is learning about to help us be more effective protectors!



Scenes from recent LaGrange Group Outings

GROUP INFO & CONTACTS

Laura Breyfogle ♦ breyfogle@charter.net ♦ *Chair*

Sim Blitch ♦ simblitch@charter.net ♦ *Conservation Chair*

Joanna Baxter ♦ joannabbaxter@yahoo.com ♦ *Outings Chair*

Monthly Meetings: 3rd Tuesday; 6:30 p.m. welcome and refreshments, 7 p.m. program; St. Mark's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 207 N. Greenwood St., LaGrange (no meetings June-August).

GREATER GWINNETT GROUP

Gwinnett Group Spotlights EVs

DAN FRIEDMAN

The Gwinnett Group has had two educational meetings exploring electric vehicles and outreach with Green Georgia. We learned about efforts to improve the economic viability of electric vehicles in Georgia. Additionally, we continued our letter writing campaign with May's campaign focused on getting our legislators to enhance electric vehicles in Georgia.

Our stream monitoring program continues with another member, Ed Paradis, becoming a certified monitor. We are excited about Ed being certified as he gives us more flexibility and capacity in our stream monitoring program. As we move forward, programs on Georgia Power's Plant Vogtle and water quality will be our upcoming programs.

GROUP INFO & CONTACTS

Dan Friedman ♦ dan3688@aol.com ♦ *Chair*

Art Sheldon ♦ asheldon.cp81@gtalumni.org ♦ *Conservation Chair*

Jake Hardison ♦ jake.hardison@ssa.gov ♦ *Outings Chair*

Monthly Meetings: 3rd Thursday, 7 p.m., Berkmar High School, 405 Pleasant Hill Road, Lilburn.

Savannah River Group A Leader for Clean Water

LINDA MCBURNEY

"Any river is really the summation of the whole valley. To think of it as nothing but water is to ignore the greater part."

- HAL BORLAND, AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST

Several years ago our Group decided to champion clean water. As a result we have a Savannah Riverkeeper and active Adopt-a-Stream (AAS) programs in both Richmond and Columbia County.

Dr. Frank Carl, a former Group Chair, began the work of establishing a riverkeeper for the Savannah River with the Water Alliance. Dr. Carl was the first Savannah Riverkeeper, and the initial Board of Directors were all Sierra Club members. That was an endorsement of the commitment our Group had and continues to have for the Savannah River and its tributaries. Frank remains involved with our Group and is now our Conservation Chair.

The local AAS program began to grow after Dr. Carl became a certified instructor, then he trained Dr. John Graham. Dr. Graham was teaching science to home-schooled children, and started doing water quality monitoring when he got Columbia County involved. Shortly afterwards, Mike Reardon and Eric and Brandi Cagle became AAS instructors. Dr. Graham had the desire and foresight to see that the AAS program would continue and grow so that by the time he was ready to move to North Carolina, Dr. Carl was established as the AAS coordinator for Richmond County and Mike Reardon as the coordinator for Columbia County.

The AAS program has, in fact, grown and continues to be active today in both Counties with AAS classes delivered throughout the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) communities and to middle and high schoolers. Richmond County AAS maintains a core group of six boots-in-the-water participants who are also members of the Sierra Club. Currently they monitor six sites plus a stream in South Carolina on a monthly basis. Columbia County AAS currently monitors five sites.

Columbia County Adopt-A-Stream instructors were an integral part of the creation of South Carolina's AAS

program. They taught volunteers that became certified AAS trainers and were instrumental in South Carolina creating its statewide AAS program in 2017.

Both current and past Sierra Club members have received awards for their volunteer service to Georgia AAS, including Frank Carl, Linda McBurney, Michael Reardon, Robin Reardon, Eric Cagle, Brandi Cagle, John Graham, and Charlie Belin. In addition to our Group members' awards, I would be remiss in not recognizing the Phinizy Center for Water Science's prestigious award for their AAS work—the 2005 President's Environmental Youth Award for its Creek Freaks program.

Our AAS program also made the news. In 2017, WRDW Channel 12 joined the volunteers at a site and filmed the team collecting samples and looking for macro-invertebrates and found themselves getting excited looking for the critters! To see the broadcast go to: <http://www.wrdw.com/search?searchKeywords=adopt+a+stream>

Our Group remains committed to the goals for clean water and growing the Adopt-a-Stream program. We may need to have special shoes made if we develop web-feet from being in the water so often!

GROUP INFO & CONTACTS

Lynn Walston ♦ lynnwalston22@yahoo.com ♦ *Chair*

Lee Graham ♦ leegrah3@gmail.com ♦ *Outings Chair*

Monthly Meetings: 1st Thursday, welcome/refreshments at 7 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m.; Life College, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta. For directions please contact Lynn Walston.

COASTAL GROUP

GROUP INFO & CONTACTS

Karen Grainey ♦ karengrainey@bellsouth.net ♦ *Chair*

Steve Wagner ♦ sjwgnr@hotmail.com ♦ *Outings Chair*

Monthly Meetings: 3rd Thursday, 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 520 E. Washington Ave., Savannah

REGIONAL CONTACTS

Athens & NE Georgia ♦ Ted Terry ♦ ted.terry@sierraclub.org

Forsyth County ♦ Jim Callison ♦ callisonjim@bellsouth.net

Macon ♦ Fletcher Winston ♦ winston_f@mercer.edu

North Georgia ♦ Larry Winslett ♦ winfog@windstream.net

Valdosta ♦ Brian Day ♦ bjday@valdosta.edu

CHAPTER DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

David Emory ♦ david.emory@gmail.com ♦ *Chapter Chair*
Jeffrey Schoenberg ♦ schoenbergjhe@gmail.com ♦ *Vice Chair, Administration*
Mark Woodall ♦ woodallmark8@gmail.com ♦ *Vice Chair, Conservation*
William Anderson ♦ william.y.anderson@gmail.com ♦ *At-Large Member*
Eddie Ehler ♦ edehlert@bellsouth.net ♦ *Metro Atlanta Group Delegate*
Dan Friedman ♦ dan3688@aol.com ♦ *Greater Gwinnett Group Delegate*
Karen Grainey ♦ karengrainey@bellsouth.net ♦ *Coastal Group Delegate*
Seth Gunning ♦ srgunnin@gmail.com ♦ *At-Large Member*
Marinangeles Gutierrez ♦ mari.advocates@gmail.com ♦ *At-Large Member*
Linda McBurney ♦ msmcb@outlook.com ♦ *Savannah River Group Delegate*
Ankush Patel ♦ ankushpatel67@gmail.com ♦ *Centennial Group Delegate*
William Tomlin ♦ wmltom@gmail.com ♦ *At-Large Member*
Travis Towns ♦ ftravist@aol.com ♦ *LaGrange Group Delegate*

CHAPTER EXCOM MEETINGS

The next Chapter Executive Committee meeting will be Saturday, Sept. 16 at the Chapter office in Decatur. Meetings are open to the membership. For more information, call the Chapter office at 404-607-1262 x221.

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OFFICERS AND CHAIRS

Conservation Chair ♦ Larry Winslett ♦ winfog@windstream.net
Secretary ♦ Eddie Ehler ♦ edehlert@bellsouth.net
Treasurer ♦ Tom Neff ♦ tsneff2003@yahoo.com
Finance Chair ♦ (vacant)
Fundraising Chair ♦ Marinangeles Gutierrez ♦ mari.advocates@gmail.com
Human Resources Chair ♦ Ankush Patel ♦ ankushpatel67@gmail.com
Legal Chair ♦ Erin Glynn ♦ eglynn1@gmail.com
Legislative Chair ♦ Mark Woodall ♦ woodallmark8@gmail.com
Membership Chair ♦ (vacant)
Newsletter Editor ♦ David Emory ♦ gasierran@gmail.com
Outings Chair ♦ Sammy Padgett ♦ sammypadgett@comcast.net
Political Chair ♦ Eddie Ehler ♦ edehlert@bellsouth.net
Webmaster ♦ Charlotte Gardner ♦ ga_sierra_webmaster@yahoo.com

VOLUNTEER ISSUE LEADERS

For a complete listing of Conservation Committee Chairs and Issue Leaders, please visit: <http://www.sierraclub.org/georgia/contact-us>



743 East College Ave., Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030
Phone: (404) 607-1262
E-mail: georgia.chapter@sierraclub.org
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org>

Directions to take MARTA to the Sierra Club office: Our office is an easy 2-minute walk from the Marta Avondale station (E7). We encourage you to take Marta when possible. Exit the Marta station towards the South Parking Lot, located on the E. College Ave side (currently under construction). Once outside, proceed down the temporary stairway and turn left towards Sams Street. Cross over Sams St. and the office is the building located right behind the bakery. Look for the playground behind the building. Enter the fenced gate. The office is the second door from Sams St. on the right.

CHAPTER STAFF

Chapter Director

Ted Terry ♦ (404) 607-1262 x224
ted.terry@sierraclub.org

Assistant Chapter Director

Brionte McCorkle ♦ (404) 607-1262 x232
brionte.mccorkle@sierraclub.org

Chapter Coordinator

Jessica Morehead ♦ (404) 607-1262 x221
jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org

Communications Assistant

Brenda Cargin ♦ (404) 607-1262
brenda.cargin@sierraclub.org

NATIONAL STAFF

Beyond Coal Organizing Representative

Ian Karra ♦ (404) 607-1262 x233
ian.karra@sierraclub.org

Southeast Military Veterans &

Outdoors Coordinator

Lornett Vestal ♦ (404) 607-1262 x222
lornett.vestal@sierraclub.org

NATIONAL PROGRAM CONTACTS

Inspiring Connections Outdoors

Terri Lyde ♦ lydeterri@bellsouth.net

Sierra Student Coalition

OUTINGS

Sierra Club Outings provide a variety of opportunities for people to enjoy the beautiful outdoors. To see a list of upcoming outings, please visit our outings calendar at <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/outings>

What to Bring

For day hikes always bring lunch and enough water. Consider layered clothing, sunscreen, good hiking boots with treads, and hiking poles. Non-service dogs are allowed only if specified in the listing; canine hikers should bring leashes, litter bags, and water for their dogs.

Liabilities

To participate on a Sierra Club outing, you will need to sign a liability waiver. To read a copy of the waiver form, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/outingswaiver> or call (404) 607-1262.

Carpooling

Carpooling helps the environment and allows people without cars to participate. If you are driving to a hike, please stop by the carpool point to pick up others. If you're a rider, pay a share of expenses. Many activities are listed on the Chapter's Meetup site a couple weeks in advance of the event. Join the Meetup group and post a comment requesting or offering a ride: www.meetup.com/georgia-sierra-club.

Become an Outings Leader!

Do you like spending time in the outdoors? Like seeing new places and meeting new people? If you have ever thought about leading outings, then this is the perfect volunteer opportunity for you! The Sierra Club has been offering outings for over 100 years, furthering the Sierra Club's conservation goals around the country. We can give you the preparation you need for certification by the Chapter or your local group as a qualified leader of safe, enjoyable outings.

ATLANTA INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS

Sierra Club Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) is a community outreach program providing opportunities for urban youth to explore, enjoy and protect the natural world. The goal of the Atlanta ICO program is to help young people discover the beauty of wild places, to foster an appreciation for nature, and to help them acquire the necessary skills to enjoy these places safely. Through active involvement with nature, the program increases participants' environmental awareness, interpersonal skills and self esteem.

SUMMER 2017 CALENDAR

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

AUGUST 28 • MONDAY

Savannah River Group Stream Monitoring. We will be monitoring Rae and Euchee Creeks. Contact Larry at larrkomp@gmail.com for details. • ADOPT-A-STREAM EVENTS

Wildlands & Wildlife Committee. Join us for our regular meetings at the Chapter office in Decatur (see p. 13 for directions). Contact Jessica Morehead (jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org). • COMMITTEES

AUGUST 29 • TUESDAY

Fundraising Writing Party! Join staff and volunteers to help with our next fundraising mailer. Drop by the Chapter office anytime between 5:00 and 9:00 pm. Food and drink provided. • CHAPTER EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 19 • TUESDAY

Savannah River Group Ice Cream Social. Join the fun to help with stream monitoring by getting in the water or observing. We will be monitoring Rae and Euchee Creeks. Contact Larry at larrkomp@gmail.com. • GROUP EVENTS

OCTOBER 20-22 • FRIDAY - SUNDAY

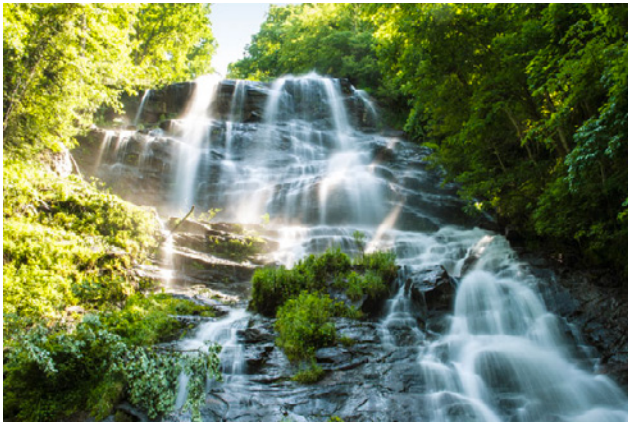
2017 Georgia Chapter Gathering. Join us at Amicalola Falls Lodge for our biennial Chapter Gathering. See opposite page for details. • CHAPTER EVENTS



CALL FOR CHAPTER EXCOM NOMINATIONS

The Chapter Nominating Committee is seeking candidates for the Executive Committee (ExCom). The Chapter ExCom has oversight responsibility for the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club to ensure that it is carrying out our mission productively. If you know of someone who would be a good ExCom member, or if you are interested in serving yourself, contact Seth Gunning at srgunnin@gmail.com. Chapter and Group candidate statements and any nomination petitions for petition candidates must be submitted by **September 15, 2017**. You may refer to the Chapter website (<http://www.georgia.sierraclub.org>) to review the responsibilities of ExCom.

Complete rules for the election are posted on the Sierra Club website. Ballots with candidate statements will be mailed by October 15. Ballots must be received by 5 p.m., November 16 in the Chapter office in Decatur. Details for returning ballots and ballot counting will be published in the next *Sierran*.



The Georgia Sierra Club's Fall Gathering is Fast Approaching!

We will come together for our biennial gathering on the weekend of **October 20-22** at **Amicalola Falls Lodge** to celebrate our community's 125 years of service to the environment. Please join us as we enjoy all things fall in the North Georgia mountains, including nature photography, morning yoga and meditation, and a drum circle. Educational workshops will be offered, with topics including Sierra Club 101, Clean Energy Jobs, Anti-Racism Dialogue, Military Outdoors, and Sustainable Activism.

On Saturday night, we will gather for an awards banquet. We will hear from Georgia's environmental leaders, celebrate all of the work that has been done through the Georgia Chapter, and recognize all of the people we could not have done it without. We hope to see you there!

TICKET PRICES

	Members	Non-members*
Early Bird (through Sept. 1)	\$65	\$85
Standard (Sept. 1-Oct. 15)	\$85	\$105
Last-minute (Oct. 15-20)	\$100	\$120

* Not a Sierra Club member? Add a membership for \$15 and take advantage of membership ticket prices!

WHAT DOES MY TICKET INCLUDE?

Your ticket price covers all workshops, the Friday night chili cook-off with drinks provided, a Saturday box lunch, and Saturday night banquet with open bar.

MEALS

Attendees are responsible for any meals not listed above. A **breakfast buffet** in the lodge restaurant is available for \$16. Meal cost for kids 5 - 12 is half price and 4 and under eat for free!

LODGING

Lodging options at Amicalola include:

- ♦ **Campsites** - Private campsites are \$38 per night plus \$5 parking pass if you do not have a State Park pass. Campsites can accommodate a maximum of 2 tents or 5 people.
- ♦ **Lodge Rooms** - Private rooms are \$222 per night plus tax and fees. Configurations range from 1 king bed to 2 queens and a full. ADA-accessible rooms are available.
- ♦ **Cabins** - Private cabins are \$280 per night plus tax and fees. Configurations range from 1 king bed to 1 king and 2 full beds. All cabins have one regular sofa.

If you would like to book any of these private options and do not need help finding a roommate, please call Amicalola Lodge directly to reserve your cabin, lodge room, or campsite at 1-800-573-8656. Tell them you are with the Georgia Sierra Club.

If you need to cut down your lodging costs, consider sharing a room, cabin, or campsite! Chapter staff will help make shared-lodging arrangements, with options as low as \$19 per night. Please visit the registration page for details. **All lodging reservations must be made by Sept. 18th.**

SCHOLARSHIPS

Need a scholarship for your ticket or lodging? Email Jessica Morehead at jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org, Subject Line: Fall Gathering Scholarship Request.

BECOME A SPONSOR!

Become a Retreat Sponsor! Help make our retreat more accessible by providing a scholarship for another retreat attendee. Register online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/become-a-retreat-sponsor-tickets-36725689526>

CARPOOLING

Want to carpool with other Sierrans to the retreat? Volunteers are setting up and joining their own carpools through this site: <https://www.groupcarpool.com/t/ubhtvn>

If you have any questions regarding the retreat, please contact Brenda Cargin at brenda.cargin@sierraclub.org.

Register Online Today at <http://bit.ly/sierra-fall-2017>



**SIERRA
CLUB**

GEORGIA CHAPTER

743 E. College Ave., Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030

Change service requested

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID



SAVE THE DATE OCTOBER 20-22
AMICALOLA LODGE



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Facebook.com/SierraClubGA

Twitter @GASierraClub

Instagram @GASierraClub

SIERRACLUB.ORG/GEORGIA

Head to our website for all sorts of great resources and opportunities including:

- Issue briefs
- Full events and activities calendar
- Group info and leadership roster
- Volunteer opportunities

UPCOMING EVENTS

See page 14 or visit georgia.sierraclub.org/calendar for our calendar of upcoming events, including:

- August 29: Fundraising Writing Party
- October 20-22: 2017 Georgia Chapter Gathering (See p. 15 for details)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nominations for the Chapter Executive Committee are currently open (see details on page 14)

VOLUNTEER

For 125 years, Sierra Club volunteers have worked to protect the environment. Be a part of the legacy! Sign up today: <http://bit.ly/2uy0EsP>