

SIERRA CLUB

Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet

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Bristol Community College is Preparing Students for Clean Energy Jobs

By D.R. Tucker

Despite the Trump administration's assault on clean energy – including his so-called “Energy Independence” executive order gutting President Obama’s Clean Power Plan, and his abhorrent decision to pull the United States out of the Paris Climate Agreement – the power sources of the future are continuing to grow in popularity and performance; a recent Sierra Club analysis found that in 41 states, more Americans are now employed by the clean-energy industry than by the fossil fuel industry. Like climate change, the viability of clean energy is no hoax, and those who (unlike Trump) recognize the long-term benefits of clean energy are preparing for the tremendous opportunities this industry provides.

Bristol Community College (BCC) in Fall River, Massachusetts is one such entity that is preparing the public for a clean-energy future. Founded seven years ago with a grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, BCC’s Energy and Sustainability Center trains both students and current employees in the state’s surging clean-energy industry. This can be everything from installing wind turbines and solar panels, to weatherizing homes, to energy efficiency retrofitting and sustainable gardening, according to Carmen Aguilar, Dean of the school’s Center for Workforce and Community Education.

Continued on page 4



MASSACHUSETTS
SIERRA CLUB

Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter

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MASSACHUSETTS
**SIERRA
CLUB**

Chapter Staff

Emily Norton, *Chapter Director*
Aileen Kelley, *Chapter Coordinator*
Kevin O'Brien, *Outreach Organizer*
Jacob Stern, *Clean Energy Organizer*
Calish Castro, *Boston Organizer*
Michele Brooks, *Pipeline Organizer*
Veena Dharmaraj, *Electric Bus Outreach Coordinator*

National Staff (Chapter Office)

Gina Coplon-Newfield, *Director, Clean Transportation for All Campaign*
Melanie MacInnis, *Director, Outdoor Activities*

Chapter Officers and Ad Hoc Committees

Officers

Mary Linders, *Chapter Treasurer*
David Heimann, *Metrics*

Executive Committee

Nathan Phillips, *Chair*
Devone Tucker, *Secretary*
Keith Burrows
Susan Butler
Margaret Cherne-Hendrick
Robert Kearns
Madeline Page
Deb Pasternak
Daniel Vernick

Groups

Greater Boston Group

John Pitkin, *Chair*
Elizabeth Kolar, *Vice Chair*
Susan Butler
Keith Burrows
David Heimann
John Kyper
Mary Ann Nelson
Jeff Picard

Cape Cod Group

Chris Polloni, *Chair*
Billie Bates, *Vice Chair*
David Dow, *Treasurer*
Diane LeDuc, *Secretary*
John Cumbler
Keith Lewison
Chris Powicki

Boston ICO (Inspiring Connections Outdoors)

Benjamin Pignatelli, *Chair*
Amy Mullen, *Treasurer*
Rachael Allison, *Fundraising*
Cassie Bannos, *Agency Liaison, BU Upward Bound*
Allison Rieck, *Volunteer Training Coordinator*

Energy Committee

Paul Dale, *Chair*
David Heimann, *Secretary*
Susan Butler
Francis Cummings
David Zeek
Doug Pope
Stephen Linksy
Ove Bjerregaard
Cheryl Rose
Keith Burrows
Bill August
Kay Herbst

Political Committee

Bill Humphrey, *Chair*
Nathaniel Lichtin
Stephen Linksy
David Rudolph
Alma Dell Smith
Daniel Vernick
Jonathan Cohn
Joseph Manning
Danny Maki

Transportation Committee

John Kyper, *Co-Chair*
Clint Richmond, *Co-Chair*

Letter from the Chapter Director



President Trump has announced his intent to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris climate accord and repeal the Clean Power Plan. He has appointed a climate change denier to head the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). His Interior Secretary has celebrated expanding leasing for fossil fuel development, and even had the Bureau of Land Management's homepage swap an image of a family enjoying our public lands to one of a coal mine.

While our national Sierra Club colleagues battle the fossil fuel enthusiasts in the White House, here in the Commonwealth it is more important than ever that we lead in the transition to an economy and society powered by clean energy.

The Massachusetts chapter is stepping up to that challenge.

At the state level we are mounting vigorous campaigns for important legislation in clean energy and transportation, pollution, wildlife protection and transparency in government.

At the local level we are supporting and empowering local officials and community leaders in areas such as protecting waterways, reducing plastic pollution and moving to renewable energy. Local actions are important in their own right, and can lead to state-level action. Can you organize a volunteer training at your local library? Can you spare an hour a month to be a city or town captain? Can you show up at a public hearing or rally?

There are many ways to get involved and make your voice heard.

We could not do any of this without your support.

Thank you!

Emily
Emily Norton
Chapter Director



2017 Accomplishments: Many Victories Thanks to YOU!

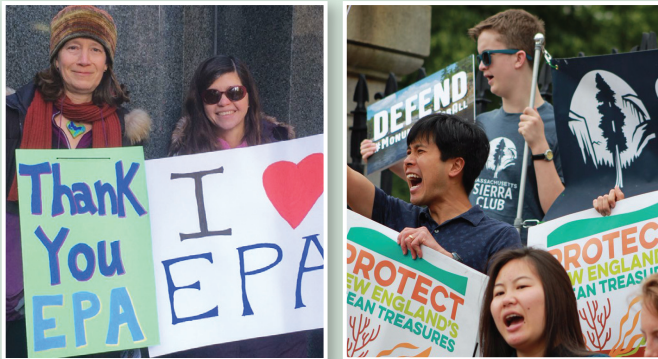


January

- Led Sierra Club contingent in Boston Women's March
- Electric Vehicle bill passed with strong advocacy from Mass. Chapter

February

- Rallied in support of EPA at Region One Boston office
- Led Sierra Club contingent in Boston Stand up for Science rally
- Led two Volunteer Trainings in Boston



March

- Recruited 74 local Conservation Commissions to send letter to Governor Baker urging him to drop support for new gas pipelines
- Led Volunteer Trainings in North Andover, and Holland, Mass.

April

- Helped lead Boston People's Climate Rally
- Organized hundreds of Massachusetts residents on buses to D.C. for People's Climate March

- Testified in support of state-level bill to change our state seal which features imagery offensive to Native Americans
- Organized Climate Change summit at Cape Cod Academy
- With five other advocacy groups released report card giving Governor Baker "C" grade on environmental policies
- Led Volunteer Training in Amherst



Photo credit: Jackson Cote

May

- Last coal plant in Somerset, Mass. was retired, making Mass. coal-free
- Partnered with Worcester Tree Initiative, Green Hill Park Coalition, and Mass DCR to plant 38 trees in Memorial Grove, Worcester's living monument to the fallen of WWI
- Co-hosted Hull Turbine & EV boat cruise with non-profit Mass Energy



Pleasant Bay, an area of critical environmental concern. Please visit www.pleasantbay.org for more info.

*Photo credit © Christopher Seufert Photography
<http://www.CapeCodPhoto.net>*

2017 Accomplishments - continued to page 18

Volunteers Who Have Made A Difference

By Rick Goldberg

How can one person affect the global issue of climate change?



Bristol Community college - continued from page 1

Dean Aguilar says the program serves on average 80 to 90 students a year--students who find lucrative work that will help consumers save both money and the planet.

One such student is Mike Plasski, Jr., of Fall River, who praises the center for how effectively it develops the skills of those pursuing clean-energy careers. Plasski anticipates that colleges and universities in other states will emulate BCC's efforts, since "Massachusetts has been number one in this field."

As for those currently working in the clean-energy field, Matthew Perry of JM of New Bedford, a company that specializes in re-insulating existing homes, says several of his employees have been well-prepared by the Center to obtain the certification necessary to participate in the Mass SAVE home energy audit program. "We've had very good feedback" from JM's employees regarding the quality of the Center's training, he says.

By equipping Bay Staters for the opportunities the flourishing clean-energy industry provides, Bristol Community College is focusing on the power sources of the future.

For more information visit <http://bit.ly/bristolcc>.

Veena Dharmaraj began as a volunteer working to ban single-use plastic bags, polystyrene food containers and microbeads in personal care products. She wrote action alerts, developed fact sheets and worked on a petition campaign with Girl Scout troops to support the bag ban in Boston. As a part of fund raising efforts, Veena researched and developed a shortlist of foundations that support clean energy advocacy. Veena now works part-time with the Sierra Club to promote the adoption of electric buses by transit agencies in Massachusetts. She is inspired by volunteering with like-minded people who engender inclusiveness. "Any time spent volunteering can make an impact," says Veena. "Even if you have limited time to give, it can make a difference."



Sung-Jae Park enjoys motivating voters to speak with their state legislators about specific legislation. He helps teach people how to communicate with their representatives and senators, and how to write letters to local newspapers. "Many people are intimidated by the idea of reaching out to their legislators," he says. "They shouldn't be, because your elected official works for you."

Michele Brooks has carried out a wide variety of projects. As an intern for the Sierra Club's Electric Vehicle Initiative, Michele surveyed auto dealerships about plug-in electric vehicles to assess marketing strategies, and sales staff knowledge of EV technology. She also created a brochure for the chapter, organized a "kayaktivism" event on the Charles River to raise awareness of Shell Oil drilling in the Arctic, and helped organize the Sierra Club's Volkswagen Settlement Guide for Advocates, and webi-

nars on the Volkswagen Emissions Settlement proceedings. After all this volunteering, Michele was the natural choice to be hired when the chapter received a grant to carry out some anti pipeline work; in that position she helped recruit Boards of Health across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to sign onto a letter to Governor Baker urging him not to invest in new natural gas pipelines.



Paul Hong researched and compiled lists of environmental reporters and the subjects they covered. He also contacted state legislative offices to urge them to sign onto a letter supporting Electric Vehicle readiness in the state building code. "My experience at the Sierra Club confirmed for me an interest in a career in protecting the environment," said Paul. "I am particularly interested in water resources and ocean warming."



Cara Goodman gave presentations on the Massachusetts Renewable Portfolio Standard which mandates a certain percentage of renewable energy in the grid. She also educates volunteers to train them how to speak to their state legislators. "I have a strong background in energy policy,"

says Cara. "Now I am interested in moving more into the advocacy field. Volunteering with Sierra Club is giving me valuable experience to make this switch."



Celia Doremus spends one day a week at the Mass. Chapter office handling whatever needs to be done that day. She writes and distributes action alerts, participates in volunteer training events, and works with staff to develop educational events that highlight the importance of regulating emissions from fossil fuels and slowing climate change.



"I see, up close, the complexity and quality of work involved to 'make things happen' and what a difference a few hours a week makes to help the Sierra Club carry out its mission," says Celia. "It is a remarkably

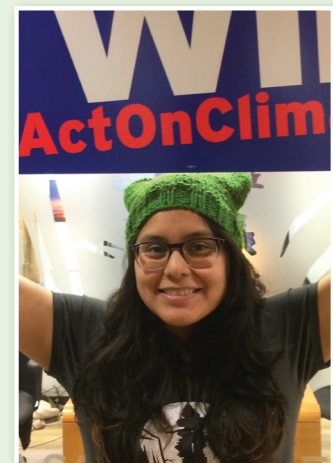
effective organization and I encourage anyone who is interested in preserving our planet to get involved. It's also really fun and a great way to meet new, like-minded people!"

Through these actions, these six volunteers have motivated dozens of citizens to become environmental activists and in turn enlist others to speak with their legislators and push for Massachusetts legislation that addresses climate change.

Remembering Chapter Intern Treicy Torres

Our beloved volunteer leader, intern, and friend Treicy Torres passed away on July 21st in her home state of North Carolina from complications after a routine medical procedure. Treicy was 24 years old.

Treicy was our organizer for the People's Climate March in Washington, DC this past spring, previously interned with us in 2016, and was always looking for ways to help more. She was a rising Senior at Boston University where she majored in Environmental Policy. Treicy was an incredible person with unlimited potential and will be dearly missed. Please consider visiting the GoFundMe page <https://www.gofundme.com/c2d2q0> created by her family and boyfriend.



Landlord Invests in Energy Efficiency

By Rick Goldberg



When Judy Kolligan realized that her rental property in Jamaica Plain needed a new roof, she looked into installing attic insulation at the same time. She wanted to do something to help the environment while making the rental unit more comfortable for her tenant, Mary Eng.

Judy wanted to lower the heating and cooling expenses. But her tenant paid for them. So why did Judy care? Why did Judy want to spend money for which there would be no payback? Why did she want to spend her money to lower the utility expenses for her tenant?

“My tenant has been renting from me long-term and I have a good relationship with her,” replied Judy. “I wanted to help her lower her overall rental expenses. This was not to make the unit more desirable for a future tenant.”



Examples of the Clean Energy Economy in Massachusetts

By Paul Dale

The clean energy economy is creating new jobs in Massachusetts. Here are three examples.

Loci Controls, Fall River, MA – The leader in optimizing gas collection at landfills nationwide

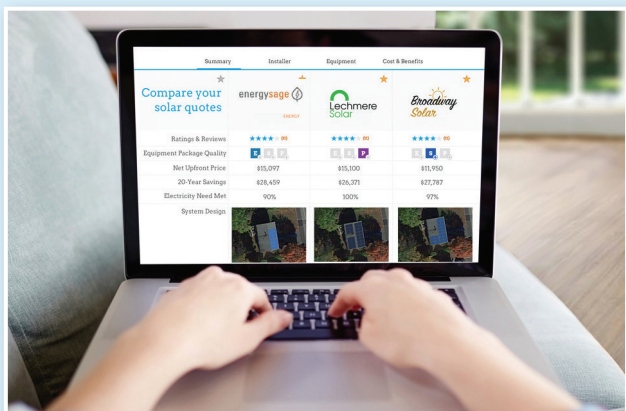
According to the EPA, methane escaping from landfills is the 3rd largest source of methane pollution in the US and accounts for 3-5% of total US greenhouse gas



Loci Control at LA county municipal landfill with over 2,500 collection wells, generating 60 MW of power onsite, the largest landfill in the US).

emissions. If a landfill smells bad it means methane and other gases are escaping. Peter Quigley, Loci Controls CEO, points out that current methods used to collect the gas from landfills involve a completely manual process requiring once a month technician visits to 100,000 collection points in the 2000 landfill sites across the country. Loci Controls is changing this. Their remotely operated automated monitoring and control systems optimize gas collection, increasing gas collection by 20-30% over manual methods. (Collected gas can be flared off, compressed and bottled for use as natural gas or used to fuel on site electricity generation. Over 2000MW is generated annually from landfills.)

Loci Controls is an example of new innovation that addresses a significant problem that has received little attention. The company was founded four years ago by two MIT graduates and is now ramping up. In August 2016 there were 6 employees, now there are 15 in Massachusetts and the number is expected to double in the next year. <http://www.locicontrols.com/>



EnergySage, Boston, MA – Get competing solar quotes online

EnergySage in Boston is the “Orbitz of solar”. Their online service allows homeowners to get competing quotes from the solar companies that EnergySage has vetted. EnergySage solves two challenges: How do potential buyers find good deals and have confidence they made the right decision? On the flip side, with a reasonable marketing cost, how do installers find customers? Currently operating in 35 states with 22 employees, users of the EnergySage online quotation system generated \$200 million in solar business last year, of which \$50 million was in Massachusetts. Forty Massachusetts installers participate in the EnergySage competitive bidding system. Their service expands the solar market and related job growth by installers. Electricians, master electricians, salespeople, program managers, procurement specialists, office staff, and roofers are all required. Utility companies add staff to handle interconnection with the grid. John Gingrich, SVP at EnergySage, sees a sunny future; the price of solar panels dropped 6% earlier this year. https://www.energysage.com/?rc=scma_res

The Solar Industry – New Jobs for Massachusetts

The recession of 2007 - 2008 was a difficult time for electricians. Many left the job market, left for other states or other employment. Massachusetts lost skilled jobs and skilled workers. Times are changing! Joe Casey, IBEW North East Business Development, sees that



Joe Casey, IBEW Northeast Business Development, says 'solar is creating a high demand for electricians.

residential and commercial solar is creating a huge demand for electricians. Young adults see a long term career potential in the electrical industry where none previously existed. In 2016 the smallest of the four International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) locals in Massachusetts, located in Springfield, recorded 288,000 man-hours of solar business. This represents 70MW of added solar capacity and 140 man-years of a employment in the depressed Springfield area. It does not include related employment in construction, supply houses, or jobs in the utility companies. Nor does it include the solar work of non-union electricians where no data is available.

These are good jobs. IBEW provides healthcare and retirement benefits and spends 60 cents from every man-hour to fund training for new electricians. The Springfield solar business generated \$172,000 for training last year and the Springfield training program doubled in size to 40 apprentices. Training for the new electrician jobs is important, especially as even newer technology ramps up such as storage systems and EV charging infrastructure. Demand outstrips supply. The IBEW locals in Massachusetts are bringing in electricians from Vermont and New Hampshire because there are not enough electricians here. For electricians, the good days are coming back but only because of the state's support for renewable energy.

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER AND GROUP ELECTION NOMINEES

CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINEES

(vote for not more than 5)

Susan Butler of Cambridge

The Massachusetts Sierra Club has been very active on many fronts to preserve the environment, open space, and foster sustainable energy use. As an early adopter in energy innovation, I have benefited from the support and encouragement I have found at MA Sierra Club. The advocacy with state and local governments has been admirable. Collaborations with other groups' efforts has been excellent. I am very impressed by the many opportunities that Sierra Club MA has pursued to protect the good in our environment and build a better world for us all and for future generations. I would like to help with these many efforts as a member of the Executive Committee.



John Kyper of Roxbury

As a Roxbury resident and longtime public transportation activist, I am especially concerned with issues of environmental justice. Businesses, institutions and government all affect our quality of life, through highway expansion, siting of pollution-generating facilities, etc. I have long fought for equity in urban and transportation planning, like the North-South Rail Link and rail on corridors including the Green Line Extension to Somerville and Medford. Such policies greatly benefit residents by eliminating greenhouse gases and other toxins, also reduc-



ing our dependence on the private automobile by providing cleaner and attractive alternatives.

Please support my candidacy for the Chapter's Executive Committee.

Paul Kelly of Worcester

As a member of the board, I hope to lend my perspective from the field of community organizing, coalition building, campaign operations, and political advocacy gained through my previous experiences. Thus far, I have worked on increasing the net-metering caps in Massachusetts and restoring the EPA's Clean Water protections to 1 in 3 Americans' access to safe drinking water. I wish to continue making an impact on issues like increasing renewable usage and diversifying our state's energy mix through the RPS. I vehemently oppose any and all pipeline taxes among other forms of environmentally-destructive corporate welfare and government capture.



Benjamin Pignatelli of Jamaica Plain

I have been active with the Sierra Club since 2005 and an environmentalist my entire adult life. Working through difficult resource management issues at Lake Tahoe before moving back to New England exposed me to the Club's vibrant community and professional approach. I currently serve as volunteer



chair of the Club's Boston Inspiring Connections Outdoor youth outreach program. I have served on the Greater Boston Group Executive Committee, and support the Chapter's engagement in statewide issues ranging from clean energy, resource protection, and recreation access. Professionally, I am a Regulatory Economist at the Department of Public Utilities' Electric Power Division.

Nathan Phillips of Newton



Over the last two years on the Executive Committee, I've spoken out as a climate scientist to energize our winning campaigns against expansion of natural gas infrastructure. Together we've stopped the proposed Northeast Direct Pipeline and killed the pipeline tax that would have increased Massachusetts' gas dependency for decades. We must relentlessly continue our fight for climate justice alongside communities from Weymouth and Quincy to Sandisfield to stop new compressor station and pipeline projects, while accelerating the transition to a 100% renewable energy future. I'm in this with you to win, and I ask for your vote.

D.R. Tucker of Brockton

It has been an honor to serve for the past two years on the Executive Committee, and I humbly ask for a second term. We have a moral obligation to make Massachusetts not just a national leader, but an international leader on clean energy. We have a moral obligation to bring as much pressure as possible upon the State House, Capitol Hill and the White House to pay needed attention to the climate crisis. And we have a moral obligation to stand foursquare against the forces of climate denial in New



England and beyond. We can – and must – meet these obligations.

CAPE COD GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE¹ NOMINEES

(vote for not more than 2)

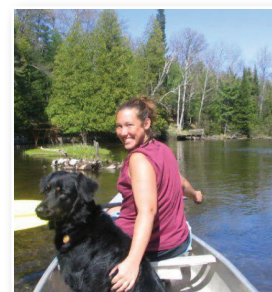
Matthew Cannon of Chatham

There is an urgent need for upholding and strengthening environmental protections/initiatives in this country. The most effective method is community engagement, education, and activism. The Sierra Club is a well-respected institution with a solid membership and broad reach and has been achieving these goals for decades. I want to broaden my experience and impact my local and regional community to combat the effects of climate change. I bring solid professional experiences and know the Cape Cod community well. I hope to become a member of the Executive Committee.



Jessica MacManus of Osterville

Jessica MacManus is a science educator at Cape Cod Academy in Osterville and has an M.Sc. in Wildlife Biology from Purdue. Jessica has led high school students on wildlife conservation trips to Tanzania with National Geographic's Student Expeditions. Her focus is on creating place-based education programs to help students become environmental stewards of the habitats in their own backyards. Jessica hopes to join the Cape Cod Group Excomm to bring a fresh voice, passion, and



¹ Cape Cod Group covers all of Barnstable, Nantucket and Dukes counties including the Elizabeth Island and the portion of Bourne that is west of the Cape Cod Canal.

drive to our local club as we determine the most effective way to be impactful amid a perilous national political climate.

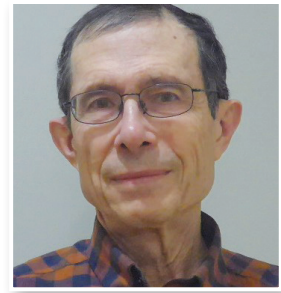
GREATER BOSTON GROUP (GBG) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE² NOMINEES

(vote for not more than 1)

John Pitkin of Cambridge

I am a retired, full-time climate activist-innovator in my first term on the GBG ExCom, also serv-

ing on the board of Green Cambridge, as organizer of a neighborhood, Inman Square, Climate Action Team and member of Elders Climate Action. I believe we must take a holistic approach to the ecological crisis of climate change, reduce, then eliminate emissions of GHGs and rapidly restore our regional and local ecosystems and soils to mitigate the effects of climate change and draw carbon from the atmosphere. The Sierra Club should initiate and advocate for regional eco-restoration efforts by members and policy makers alike.



**VOTE
NOW**



CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS BALLOTS + VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

MAIL BALLOTS TO:

Sierra Club Massachusetts Elections
50 Federal Street, 3rd Floor, Boston, MA 02110

Your Member ID# MUST appear on the outside of the envelope for ballot to be valid; omit name/return address to ensure secret ballot (your 8-digit member ID# is on your address label above your name).

Ballots due NLT 5:00 PM on Friday, 12/08/17.

Please contact Margaret Cherne-Hendrick at mhendrick@massachusetts.sierraclub.org with questions.

² GBG covers Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Dedham, Everett, Lexington, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Needham, Newton, Quincy, Reading, Revere, Somerville, Stoneham, Waban, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, Weymouth, Winchester, Winthrop, and Wollaston.

OFFICIAL BALLOT

Primary / individual member ballot

Part 1: All chapter members can vote for Chapter Executive Committee.

Chapter Executive Committee Nominees

(vote for not more than five or ballot will be invalidated)

- Susan Butler of Cambridge
- John Kyper of Roxbury
- Paul Kelly of Worcester
- Benjamin Pignatelli of Jamaica Plain
- Nathan Phillips of Newton
- D.R. Tucker of Brockton



Part 2A: Only Cape Cod Group¹ members can vote for the Cape Cod Group Executive Committee.

Cape Cod Group Executive Committee Nominees

(vote for not more than two)

- Matthew Cannon of Chatham
- Jessica MacManus of Osterville

Part 2B: Only Greater Boston Group² (GBG) members can vote for the GBG Executive Committee.

GBG Executive Committee Nominees

(vote for not more than one)

- John Pitkin of Cambridge

¹ Cape Cod Group covers all of Barnstable, Nantucket and Dukes counties including the Elizabeth Island of the portion of Bourne that is west of the Cape Cod Canal.
² GBG covers Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Dedham, Everett, Lexington, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Needham, Newton, Quincy, Reading, Revere, Somerville, Stoneham, Waban, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Weymouth, Winchester, Winthrop, and Wollaston.

OFFICIAL BALLOT

Joint member ballot / two addressees on mailing label

Part 1: All chapter members can vote for Chapter Executive Committee.

Chapter Executive Committee Nominees

(vote for not more than five or ballot will be invalidated)

- Susan Butler of Cambridge
- John Kyper of Roxbury
- Paul Kelly of Worcester
- Benjamin Pignatelli of Jamaica Plain
- Nathan Phillips of Newton
- D.R. Tucker of Brockton



Part 2A: Only Cape Cod Group¹ members can vote for the Cape Cod Group Executive Committee.

Cape Cod Group Executive Committee Nominees

(vote for not more than two)

- Matthew Cannon of Chatham
- Jessica MacManus of Osterville

Part 2B: Only Greater Boston Group² (GBG) members can vote for the GBG Executive Committee.

GBG Executive Committee Nominees

(vote for not more than one)

- John Pitkin of Cambridge

¹ Cape Cod Group covers all of Barnstable, Nantucket and Dukes counties including the Elizabeth Island of the portion of Bourne that is west of the Cape Cod Canal.
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Are you considering running for local or state office, or knows someone who is?

Remember that Sierra Club makes endorsements! To be considered for endorsement a candidate must reach out to our Political Committee and request a questionnaire.

For more information contact inquiries@massachusetts.sierraclub.org

Eastern King Bird
Woburn, MA

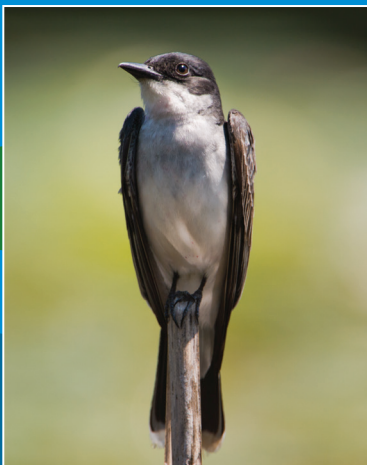
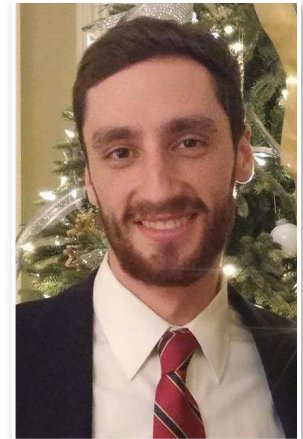


Photo credit Nathan Goshgarian © 2017

Welcome Jacob!

In May 2017 we welcomed Jacob Stern as a Clean Energy Organizer. Jacob is working across Massachusetts to help recruit, educate, and empower local community leaders on clean energy and climate change. "I am excited to be working with the Massachusetts Sierra Club," he said. "My goal is to help these leaders become more motivated and effective advocates for ambitious clean energy policies." Jacob comes from a grassroots organizing background with experience working local legislators in both Maine and Massachusetts, and has a BA and Masters Degree from Clark University.



Welcome Calish!

Calish Castro joined the Mass. Chapter as Boston Organizer in July 2017. Calish has worked on presidential, congressional and local campaigns as well as with other non-profit organizations in Florida, Virginia, North Carolina and Washington D.C. He is a veteran of the United States Army, including a deployment to Afghanistan, and graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a degree in Political Science.



Welcome Mel!

Melanie (Mel) Mac Innis recently relocated from Berkeley, California to Massachusetts and now works out of our Chapter office. As Sierra Club's Director of Outdoor Activities, Mel trains and supports volunteers and staff across the country to connect ALL people to meaningful outdoor experiences. Her favorite part of the job is working and playing with Sierra Club volunteers and partner organizations who are working for inclusive outdoor spaces for all. Mel is a whitewater raft guide, a walker and a sometimes open water swimmer. She looks forward to getting to know the outdoor spaces New England has to offer. Mel is also a member of the Equity Support Team assisting volunteers as we transition to become a more welcoming and inclusive organization.



Mel holds a Masters of Arts and a Bachelor's degree in the Humanities from San Francisco State University. Earlier this year, Mel was quoted in Outside Magazine as one of ten women leading the Outdoor Industry.

Green Burials, Green Legacy

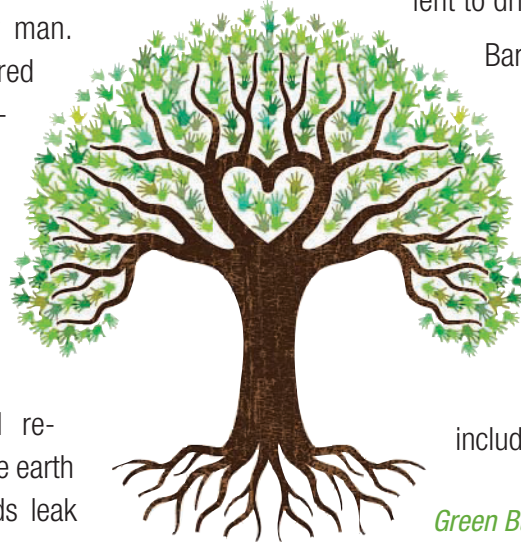
By *Sonali Deshpande*

If you frequent environmentalist events and rallies, you probably hear a lot about issues like greenhouse gas pollution or ocean acidification. Maybe you even drive an electric car, or have solar panels on your roof. Maybe you're like John Muir, and you really appreciate the natural world—public, preserved, and untouched by man.

Even so, you may not have considered one issue currently plaguing our planet: burials. That's right, the traditional procedure of soaking your loved ones in toxic embalming fluids and placing them in a large vault for the rest of time has some not-so-great environmental ramifications.

Not only are burials expensive and resource-consuming, they even pollute the earth when chemicals from embalming fluids leak

into the ground. The 827,060 gallons of toxic embalming fluid we use every year can leak into ecosystems and public water supplies, and these fluids often contain chemicals like formaldehyde—a known carcinogen—for preservation purposes. Not only can these fluids pose a problem underground, but if an embalmed body is cremated, it will emit noxious substances like dioxin, hydrochloric acid, sulfur dioxide, and the notoriously polluting carbon dioxide straight into the atmosphere. This doesn't even take into account the energy required to cremate a single body, which is equivalent to driving 4,800 miles.



Barring the problem with embalming fluids, there is also simply not enough land for many more burial plots. If all of the roughly 76 million Americans who are projected to reach the current average life expectancy between 2024 and 2042 were buried in standard burial plots, it would take up an area roughly the size of Las Vegas. This doesn't even include pathways, trees, and other non-grave

Green Burials, Green Legacy - continued to page 17



Photo credit: Caley McGuane

Pam Wilmot (left), Executive Director, Massachusetts Common Cause, **Emily Norton**, Massachusetts Director Sierra Club, and **Janet S. Domenitz**, Executive Director, MASSPIRG, testifying in favor of Automatic Voter Registration bill.

Fledgling Barred Owl - Middlesex County, MA



Photo credit Nathan Goshgarian © 2017

Leave the Leaves



By Aileen Kelley

Fallen leaves are beneficial to your yard and wildlife and should be left on the ground.

How does removing fallen leaves harm our environment?

- Gasoline-powered leaf blowers are noisy and release polluting exhaust.
- People put fallen leaves in bags and that end up in landfills.
 - According to the Environmental Protection Agency, leaves and other yard debris account for more than 13 percent of the nation's solid waste, or 33 million tons a year.
- Without enough oxygen to decompose, this organic matter releases methane, a greenhouse gas.
 - Methane traps heat in our atmosphere, which is called the greenhouse effect and warms our planet.

How does removing fallen leaves harm wildlife?

- Leaves provide important habitat for many different kinds of wildlife. Animals rely on fallen leaves for shelter, nesting material, and to hatch in spring. Critters rang-

ing from turtles and toads to birds, moles, chipmunks, as well as worms and insects, all need fallen leaves.

- If we remove this habitat, these animals' populations diminish. Many moth and butterfly caterpillars spend the winter in fallen leaves before emerging in the spring.
- Insects help pollinate our plants and are food for animals like birds and bats, and larger animals too. Every one of nature's creatures has a purpose and is part of the cycle of life.

How can you help?

- Let the fallen leaves stay where they fall. Plant and soil specialists say to leave the leaves. Leaves will enhance the lawn's fertility and help retain water. By the spring, the lower part of the leaf pile will be converted into rich soil, while the middle and top layers can be used as mulch or dug into spring garden beds as a soil enhancement.
- Make compost. Combine fallen leaves with grass clippings and food scraps, keep moist and well mixed and the resulting soil is rich in nutrients and retains water better. Also many communities will pick up leaves and make compost to sell or give away.
- Build a brush shelter. Along with branches, sticks and stems, leaves can be used to make a brush pile that shelters native wildlife.

Many people are not aware that leaf litter is necessary and removing fallen leaves hurts our environment and wildlife.



Martha's Vineyard Transit Agency To Go 100% Electric



By Veena Dharmaraj

The Martha's Vineyard Transit Agency (VTA) has committed to transition to a completely electric bus fleet. VTA is scheduled to receive four zero emission battery electric buses from California based manufacturer Build Your Dreams (BYD) in 2018. These 30-foot buses with a range of around 170 miles are expected to be in operation next summer.

"Approximately four vehicles are retired from the fleet every year and we are committed to replacing every diesel bus that is retired with an electric one," said Angela Grant, VTA Administrator. These buses cost between \$200,000 to \$300,000 more than a diesel bus, depending on the size of the bus but have lower maintenance and fuel costs."

An electric bus will consume about \$5,000-\$10,000 in electricity annually, far lower than the \$50,000/yr spent on diesel or \$30,000/yr spent on compressed natural gas (CNG) to fuel a similar vehicle. BYD also offers a 12-year lifetime warranty on batteries which makes it an attractive investment for transit agencies. Electric buses reduce air

pollution and improve public health. They are quieter and have four times greater fuel efficiencies than diesel or natural gas buses.

Plug in charging infrastructure for the first few buses will be installed at the VTA main building. As electric buses are introduced on some of their longer routes, VTA plans to install inductive charging infrastructure so that buses can partially recharge during each stop.

As part of the overall project VTA has plans to use solar energy in combination with energy storage to support the electrification of their fleet. This will allow VTA to remain resilient during emergencies like power outages, and storms and avoid premium pricing during times of peak demand. "In the long term, we hope this project will be the catalyst for making charging infrastructure available for municipal and private vehicles encouraging greater integration of electric vehicles in the community," said Ms. Grant.

Pessamit Innu Talk Hydro-Quebec in Massachusetts



By Kevin O'Brien

On July 18, 2017 Sierra Club Massachusetts and New Hampshire chapters arranged for Pessamit Innu tribe elders and tribal council to travel from their home in Quebec, Canada to Boston for a meeting with policymakers and press so they could describe how increasing Massachusetts' reliance on hydropower will further destroy their way of life.

The Pessamit Innu people have lived in present-day Quebec for over eight thousand years. Reminiscent of First Nation communities in the United States, their ancestral homelands have suffered the effects of colonization for centuries. This struggle continues today due to the Betsiamites Dam owned by Hydro-Quebec.

Hydro-Quebec is the public utility that manages the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity in Quebec. At the Betsiamites Dam, five turbines operating at maximum capacity cause the water level to rise up to five feet and flood the surrounding area, submerging the vital natural ecosystem that exists between the tributary and the forest. Surging waters pull trees and debris into the river, making it treacherous to cross, let alone travel or fish.

The Pessamit liken these rivers to their ancestral travel routes or "highways," now unsafe to travel. When power de-

mand drops and they ramp down to just one or two turbines, water levels drop abruptly. This rapid fluctuation in water levels often happens five or six times every day. As a result, many bankside animal and plant species, including the otter, mink, and beaver populations, have been decimated. The Betsiamites salmon are also at serious risk of complete extinction, in large part due to eroding clay cliff sides suffocating salmon egg spawning grounds with layers of thick silt. The overall impact is devastating to both the area ecology and Pessamit people.

In 2016 the Massachusetts legislature passed An Act to Increase Energy Diversity, which included procurement of 1,200 megawatts of clean energy generation, which can, but is not required to, include hydropower.

Massachusetts has a choice. Large-scale offshore wind is being deployed quickly, technology for grid-scale energy storage is rapidly advancing, potential for solar power is enormous. This means we can obtain clean energy free from the baggage of cultural and ecological genocide. Contact kevin.obrien@sierraclub.org to find out how you can help ensure our energy choices do not further imperil the Pessamit Innu.

Green Burials, Green Legacy- continued from page 13

space in a cemetery. If the practice of traditional burial continues, we are making huge areas of land permanently unusable at far too rapid a pace.

The resources used for burials each year also rack up to unfathomable numbers. According to National Geographic, “American funerals are responsible each year for the felling of 30 million board feet of casket wood (some of which comes from tropical hardwoods), 90,000 tons of steel, 1.6 million tons of concrete for burial vaults.”

Rest assured, traditional burials are not the only way. Younger generations are slowly stepping away from the idea of traditional burials and considering options that are healthier for both our planet and our wallets. “Natu-

ral burials” don’t employ traditional embalming methods, nor burial vaults, nor sometimes even caskets. The point is for the body to decompose naturally, in the way the environment intends living things to be recycled. Often, bodies are placed in biodegradable caskets or shrouds which facilitate the work of microbial decomposers. This enriches the soil and, transitively, the ecosystem around the soil.

Natural burials recognize that preserving our Earth may be more important than eternally preserving a body. This may be a stronger way to honor someone’s life than a traditional burial, especially if they were an environmentalist. A person who is naturally buried will not simply be gone—they will live on in service of the Earth.

For more information contact: sonali@massachusetts.sierraclub.org

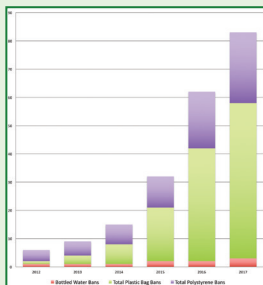


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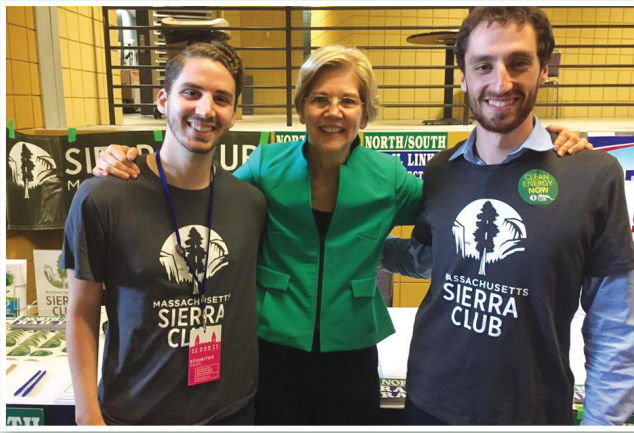
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Cumulative Total Plastic Laws in Mass.

The Mass. Sierra Club has been leading the effort on reducing plastic pollution across the state since 2012. We now have 81 local laws in 62 cities and towns. There are currently 55 plastic bags laws, 25 polystyrene laws, and 3 plastic water bottle laws – with Concord and Brookline covering all three! We are working toward Boston passing a plastic bag law soon, which will help lead to passage of a statewide ban.

2017 Accomplishments - continued from page 3



- Testified in favor of South Coast rail project, and in support of anti-poaching bill
- Rallied in support of Region One EPA staff (again!)
- Led Volunteer Trainings in Wellfleet and Westborough
- Statewide Clean Energy Organizer Jacob Stern joined chapter staff

June

- Access Northeast \$3.2 billion gas pipeline withdrawn due to “lack of public support” – you got that right! And we will continue to fight this unnecessary polluting boondoggle
- Hosted vegetarian barbecue for Cape Cod members on Pleasant Bay in Orleans (an area of critical environmental concern)
- Testified in support of bills related to Automatic Voter Registration, statewide Plastic Bag Ban, adding “nips” to Bottle Bill, Electric Vehicles, and Carbon Pricing
- Led rally for Public Lands in front of State House
- Hosted screening of “From the Ashes” at Brattle Theater in Cambridge
- Led Outing to Pond Meadow Park in Braintree
- Led Volunteer Trainings in Concord and Scituate
- Tabled at the Massachusetts Democratic Convention in Worcester

July

- Mass. and NH Sierra Club chapters hosted delegation of Pessamit Innu Elders, Deputy Chief, and Tribal Council to share their story of struggle against Hydro-Quebec (HQ) with Massachusetts political & environmental leaders; Massachusetts is potentially providing a large market for this electricity, which carries with it a long history of cultural and environmental degradation.
- Boston Clean Energy Organizer Calish Castro joined Chapter staff

- Led Volunteer Trainings in Brewster, Melrose, Plymouth, Quincy and Worcester

August

- With our strong advocacy nine Northeast states agreed to 30% reduction in carbon pollution from region’s power plants by 2030
- Massachusetts state regulators put reviews of controversial compressor station in Weymouth on hold
- Spoke at rally in support of Boston-Springfield rail line
- Held rally “Don’t let Trump eclipse our progress on public lands”
- Led Volunteer Trainings in Boston, Pittsfield, Lowell, Lynn & Shrewsbury

September

- Governor Baker announced plans for a new and stronger focus on reducing emissions from the transportation sector
- We recruited nineteen mayors to send letter to Mass. Department of Transportation calling for all-electric MBTA bus fleet starting in 2030
- Helped organize eighteen National Drive Electric Week events across Mass.
- Led Volunteer Training in Boxford

October

- With our strong support Boston City Council unanimously passed ordinance to implement Community Choice Energy program. This will allow the city of Boston to purchase electricity for its residents in bulk, and require a higher percentage of renewable energy than normally required by state law, with an option for residents to opt-in to 100%.
- Testified in favor of state-level bill to restrict pesticides, and in support of Environmental Justice bill
- Announced formation of Local Climate Leader Project, www.cleanenergymass.org, to empower and highlight local elected officials leading on climate and environment
- Led Volunteer Training in Winthrop

November

- Recruited 50 local Boards of Health to sign letter to Governor Baker urging health impact study to be undertaken before approving additional gas pipelines.

December

- You made a generous donation to the Massachusetts Chapter (This newsletter went to press prior to December, but hopefully our prediction comes true!)

Power your life with clean energy, and support the Massachusetts Sierra Club

Are you getting phone calls from companies you've never heard of asking you to switch to "green energy" - but you don't know who to trust?

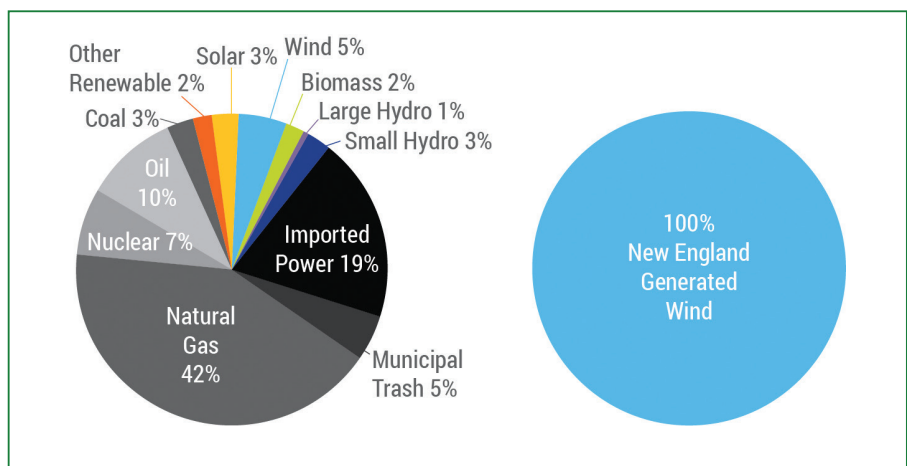
You, like many of us, may not be able to put solar panels on your roof. Sierra Club and Mass Energy Consumers Alliance have an easy way for you to purchase renewable energy for your home. We have worked together for many years to advocate for better energy policy and are teaming up now to help you switch to cleaner electricity.

Most people's electricity comes from fossil fuels and nuclear. When you make the switch with Mass Energy, your home's electricity brings renewable energy onto the grid instead.

And for each Sierra Club member who signs up, Mass Energy makes a donation to the Massachusetts Sierra Club chapter!

Making the switch adds a small additional charge for your electricity. For most households, it only adds \$10-20 per month or 35-74 cents per day.

Visit <http://info.massenergy.org/sierra-ma> for more details and to sign up, or call 1-800-287-3950. Make sure to tell them Sierra Club sent you!



How to Spend Massachusetts' \$75 million from the Volkswagen Settlement

The Mass. Sierra Club recently joined with a number of allies to make recommendations to the Department of Environmental Protection (Mass DEP) about how to spend the Commonwealth's \$75 million share of the funds from the national settlement over Volkswagen's emissions cheating scandal. The money must be used to

replace older diesel engines, but replacements can either be with newer diesel, natural gas, or electric vehicles. **The groups urged Mass DEP to prioritize investments in electric vehicles, including electric vehicle charging infrastructure and electric transit and school buses.** Mass DEP will soon be developing the Commonwealth's plan to spend the money, so send your thoughts on how to spend the money through the following survey online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JXNDT2B>.



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Donate your old car and help the environment (and get a tax deduction)

When you donate a vehicle that you no longer need or use, you reduce your environmental impact, support the charitable programs of Sierra Club here in Massachusetts sponsored by the Sierra Club Foundation, and receive a tax deduction. CARS will pick up most cars, trucks, trailers, boats, RVs, motorcycles, off-road vehicles, and heavy equipment, making it easy for you to support the Sierra Club's mission to move toward a greener future.



Please either visit <http://scfch.careasy.org/HOME.html> online or call 844-674-3772 (7 days/week). **Please be sure to mention that your donation is for the Massachusetts Chapter** if you call or choose Massachusetts Chapter from the drop-down list of options that's featured on the page.



Show your support for Sierra Club!

100% organic cotton t-shirt, \$25.00 each (includes shipping).

Women's - Small, Medium, Large, and XL

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Contact Aileen.Kelley@sierraclub.org